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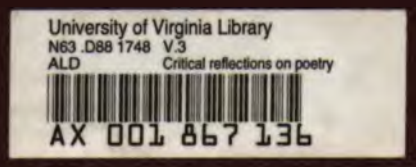

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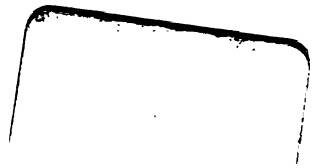

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CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON POETRY, PAINTING and MUSIC.

With

An Inquiry into the Riſe and Progreſs of the *Theatrical Entertainments* of the Ancients.

Written in FRENCH

By the Abbé DU BOS, Member and perpetual Secretary of the FRENCH ACADEMY.

Tranſlated into ENGLISH by

THOMAS NUGENT, Gent.

From the fifth Edition reviſed, corrected, and inlarged by the Author.

Ut pictura poeſis erit. ——

HOR. de arte poet.

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CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON POETRY *and* PAINTING.

PART III.

Which contains a diſſertation on the theatrical repreſentations of the ancients.

INTRODUCTION.

THE ancient muſic was a ſcience of much greater extent than the modern. The latter teaches only two things, the compoſition of muſical ſongs, and the execution of theſe ſongs, either with the voice, or inſtruments. But the ſcience of muſic had a more extenſive object among the Greeks and Romans.

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mans. It contained not only the ſame precepts as ours, but moreover it included ſeveral ſubjects which ours does not, either becauſe part of them are at preſent neglected, or becauſe the art which inſtructs us in the reſt, is not ſuppoſed to conſtitute a part of muſic, inſomuch that the perſon who profeſſes it, bears no longer the name of a muſician. Among the ancients, poetry was one of the arts ſubordinate to muſic, and conſequently the latter contained precepts relating to the conſtruction of all ſorts of verſes. The art of *Saltation* or geſture was likewiſe one of the muſical arts. Hence thoſe who taught the ſteps and attitudes of our dance, or of dancing properly ſo called, which formed a part of the art of geſticulation, had the appellation of muſicians. In fine, the ancient muſic taught to compoſe as well as write the ſimple declamation in notes, a thing diſuſed in our days. Ariſtides Quintilianus has left us an excellent book on muſic, written in the Greek tongue; and this author lived under the reign of Domitian, or Trajan, purſuant to the judicious conjecture of M. Meibomius, who publiſhed this work with a Latin verſion. According to Ariſtides, moſt of the preceding authors defined muſic: *An art which teaches a decency or grace in the voice, as well as in the motions of the body* [a].

As writers have not in general this idea of the Greek and Roman muſic, but ſuppoſe it to have

[a] Τέχνη πρέποντος ἐν φωναῖς καὶ κινήσεσι. ARIST. QUINT. lib. 1.

been

been confined within the ſame limits as ours, they are therefore very often at a loſs, upon attempting to explain what the ancients mention concerning their muſic, and the uſe it was applied to in their times. Hence it is, that the paſſages of Ariſtotle's poetics, as well as thoſe of Cicero, Quintilian, and the beſt writers of antiquity, where mention is made of their muſic, have been miſunderſtood by commentators, who imagining that theſe paſſages related to our dance and ſong; that is, to dance and ſong properly ſo called, have not been able to dive into their true meaning. The explication they give, renders them ſtill more obſcure, and is rather an obſtruction to our conceiving juſtly the manner in which the ancient dramatic pieces were acted.

I ſhall venture to undertake the explication of theſe paſſages, and eſpecially of ſuch as treat of the theatrical repreſentations. In the execution of this attempt, the plan I propoſe is as follows.

In the firſt place, I ſhall give a general idea of ſpeculative muſic and the muſical arts, that is, of ſuch as by the ancients were rendered ſubordinate to this ſcience. If I mention little or nothing concerning that branch, which teaches the principles of concords and all ſorts of harmony, 'tis becauſe it would not become me to make any change or additions to the explications, that Meibomius, M. Broſſard, M. Burette, and other modern authors have given us of the harmonic writings of the ancients.

 Secondly,

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Secondly, I shall shew that the ancients composed and wrote in notes their theatrical declamation, insomuch that those who recited, were assisted by others that accompanied them with their action.

Thirdly, I shall prove that they had reduced the art of gesture or the *saltation* (one of the arts subordinate to the science of music) into so regular a method, that in the execution of several scenes they divided the theatrical declamation between two actors, one of whom recited, while the other accompanied him with gesticulations suited to the sense of the verses; and that there were even companies of pantomimes or dumb comedians, who acted intire plays without speaking.

I shall conclude my work with some observations on the advantages and inconveniences resulting from the practice of the ancients.

CHAP. I.

General idea of the ancient music, and of the arts subordinate to this science.

THE treatise on music, written in Greek by Aristides Quintilianus, and translated into Latin by Meibomius, may be justly considered as the most instructive work that antiquity has left us on this science. 'Tis, in my opinion, the most methodical piece of this kind, and as the author was a Greek by birth, and had a constant opportunity

tunity of frequenting Roman company (having lived at a time when the country inhabited by the Greeks was subject to the successors of Augustus) he must consequently have been acquainted with the Greek and Roman practice of music. From his book therefore we shall take the general idea of the music of the ancients. Besides, the Roman music was the same as that of the Greeks from whom they borrowed this science. It had the same extent and principles in both nations, so that we may indifferently make use of Greek or Latin writers, in order to explain the extent and practice of this art among the ancients. Aristides Quintilianus defines music, [a] *an art* (but an art which demonstrates the principles on which it proceeds) *which teacheth whatever regards the use of the voice, as well as the graceful movements of the body.* He produces other definitions of music somewhat different from his own, all of which suppose alike that this science had the extent we give it.

The Latin writers affirm the same thing. *Music*, says Quintilian the orator [b], *gives instructions for regulating not only the several inflections of the voice, but likewise all the movements of the body. These inflections and movements are to be managed according to a certain and judicious method.* The

[a] Μουσική ἐστιν ἐπιστήμη μέλους, καὶ τῶν περὶ μέλος συμβαινόντων . . . . . γνῶσις τοῦ πρέποντος ἐν σώμασι καὶ κινήσεσιν. ARISTID. QUINT. l. 1.

[b] *Numeros musice duplices habet in vocibus & in corpore, utriusque enim rei aptus quidam motus desideratur.* QUINT. Inst. l. 1. c. 10.

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ſame author adds ſome lines lower: [a] *A decent and proper motion of the body is likewiſe neceſſary, which can be learnt from nō other art but muſic.*

St Auſtin, in a work he compoſed on this art, ſays the ſame thing as Quintilian. He aſſirms [b], *That muſic delivers inſtructions relating to the countenance and geſture, and in ſhort, concerning all thoſe motions of the body whoſe theory is reducible to ſcience, and their practice to method.* The ancient muſic ſubjected all the motions of the body to a regular meaſure in the ſame manner as the motions of our dancers.

The ſcience of muſic, or if you will, the ſpeculative muſic, was called *Harmonica*, becauſe it delivered the principles of harmony, and the general rules of concords. This it was that taught what we call *compoſition*. As the ſongs which were the work of compoſition, had ſometimes among the ancients, as with us, the abſolute denomination of muſic, they divided muſic, taken in the ſenſe here explained, into three *genera*, or kinds, to wit, the *Diatonic*, the *Chromatic*, and the *Enharmonic*. The difference between theſe three kinds was, that one admitted ſome ſounds which the other rejected. In the Diatonic the modulation could not make its progreſſions by intervals leſs than major ſemi-tones. The

[a] *Corporis quoque decens & aptus motus qui dicitur Eurithmia, eſt neceſſarius, nec aliunde peti poteſt.* Id. ibid.

[b] *Quicquid numeroſitatis quæ temporum atque intervallorum dimenſionibus movetur . . . . . Muſica eſt ſcientia bene movendi.* S. Aug. de Muſ. l. 1.

modulation of the Chromatic made uſe of the minor ſemi-tones; but in the [a] Enharmonic the progreſſion might be made by quarters of tones. The ancients divided their compoſitions alſo into ſeveral *genera*, with reſpect to their mode or tone, and they called theſe modes after the name of the country where they were principally uſed. Thus one was called the Phrygian mode, another the Doric, and ſo of the reſt. But I ſhall refer the reader to the moderns, who have treated thoroughly of the ancient *harmonica*; in order to come ſooner to what I have to obſerve concerning the muſical arts, which are the principal object of this diſſertation.

As muſic embraced ſo extenſive a ſubject, it was natural it ſhould include ſeveral arts, each of which ſhould have its particular object. Thus we ſee that Ariſtides Quintilianus reckons ſix ſubordinate arts to muſic. Of theſe, three taught all ſorts of compoſition, and three all kinds of execution [b].

Wherefore muſic, with reſpect to compoſition, was divided into the art of compoſing the *Melopœia*, or the ſongs; the *Rhythmica*; and the *Poetica*, or art of poetry. With regard to the execution it was divided into the *Organical*, or the art of playing upon inſtruments, the *Odical*, or the

[a] BROSSARD's Muſical Dictionary.

[b] Τὸ δὲ πρακτικὸν, εἰς τε τὸ χρηστικὸν τῶν προειρημένων τέχνας, καὶ τούτων ἑξαγγελτικόν· καὶ τῷ μὲν χρηστικῷ μέρη, μελοποιία, ῥυθμοποιία, ποίησις· τῷ δὲ ἑξαγγελτικῷ, ὀργανικὸν, ᾠδικὸν, ὑποκριτικόν. ARIST. QUINT. l. 1.

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art of singing, and the *Hypocritical*, or the art of gesticulation.

The *Melopœia*, or art of composing melody, taught the manner of composing and writing in notes all sorts of songs; that is, not only musical songs, or such as are properly so called, but likewise all kinds of recitation or declamation.

The *Rhythmica* prescribed rules for subjecting the movements of the body and the voice to a certain measure, so as to beat time with a motion suitable to the subject.

The *Poetica* taught the mechanic part of poetry; that is, how to compose regularly all kinds of verses.

We have just now observed that music, with regard to the execution, was divided into three arts; the art of playing upon instruments, called *Organical*; the art of singing, or the *Odical*; and the art of gesticulation, called *Hypocritical*.

'Tis easy to conjecture what were the lessons of the *Organical* music, and of that which was called the *Odical*, or the art of singing. With respect to the *Hypocritical*, which was so denominated by reason of its belonging properly to comedians, who by the Greeks were called ὑποκριταὶ or *counterfeiters*, it taught the art of gesture, and shewed by rules established on certain principles the manner of executing what we perform in our days merely by the direction of instinct, or at the most by a kind of rote-knowledge supported by some few observations. The Greeks called this musical art Ὄρχησις, and the Romans *Saltatio*.

Porphyry,

Porphyry, who lived about two hundred years after Aristides Quintilianus, and has left us a commentary on Ptolemy's *Harmonics*, divides the musical arts into five only, to wit, [a] the *Metrica*, the *Rhythmica*, the *Organica*, the *Poetica*, or art of poetry in its full extent, and the *Hypocritica*. We find by comparing Aristides's division to that of Porphyry, that the latter reckons two arts less than Aristides. These are the art of composing the *Melopœia*, and the art of Singing. If notwithstanding this omission, Porphyry still reckons five musical arts, whereas he should not reckon more than four, 'tis because he ranks the *Metrica* among these arts, tho' it is not mentioned by Aristides. But this difference in the enumeration does not hinder our authors from saying in the main the same thing. Let us endeavour to explain this difficulty.

Since Ptolemy most carefully observes that he takes the *Poetica* or poetic art in its greatest extent, he ought not to have spoken of the *Melopœia*, or the art of composing the *Melopœia* as of a particular art, because it is contained in the *Poetica* considered in its full extent. In effect, the art of composing the *Melopœia*, pursuant to the Greek custom, formed a part of the art of poetry. We shall see presently that the Greek poets themselves composed the *Melopœia* of their pieces. If Aristides on the contrary makes two distinct arts of the *Poetica* and the art of composing the *Melopœia*, 'tis because he had a regard to the custom of

[a] Hypomnemata in Harm. Ptol. p. 191.

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the Romans, which was, that the dramatic poets did not compose the declamation of their verses themselves, but had it done to their hands by artists who were composers by profession, and whom Quintilian calls, *Artifices pronuntiandi*. This is what we shall hereafter explain more at large.

For the same reason Porphyry has not followed Aristides, in making a particular art of that of Singing. Those who taught in Greece the *Poetica* in its full extent, instructed people likewise, in all probability, in the art of executing all sorts of songs or declamations.

When Porphyry on the other hand makes two distinct arts of the *Rhythmica*, of which Aristides makes but one; that is, when he divides what Aristides makes a single art called the *Rhythmopœia*, into the *Metrica* and the *Rhythmica* properly so called; this very likely arises from the following cause. The progress made by the pantomimes in their art, which had its first rise under Augustus, during the two centuries that elapsed from the time of Aristides to that of Porphyry, induced those who belonged to the stage to subdivide the *Rhythmica*, and consequently to make two different arts of it. One of these, which was the *Metrica* or the *measurer* pointed out the method of reducing under a certain regular measure all sorts of gestures in all kinds of sounds, that could be made to follow measure; and the *Rhythmica* taught only how to beat this measure, and especially to beat it with a proper motion. We shall see hereafter that the *movement* was, in

in the opinion of the ancients, the most important part relating to the execution of music; and the invention of the pantomimic art must have obliged them to make a profound study of whatever might perfect the art of movement. Certain it is, as we shall see hereafter, that from the reign of Augustus to the total subversion of the western empire, the representations of the pantomimes were the most pleasing entertainments that could be exhibited to the Roman people.

I conclude therefore that the difference between the enumeration of the musical arts made by Aristides Quintilianus, and that by Porphyry, is only a seeming difference, and that these two authors do not contradict one another in the main.

Let us make one observation here by way of digression. Since the ancient music gave methodical lessons on so many things, and since it contained precepts that were useful to grammarians, as well as necessary to poets and all those who were obliged to speak in public, one ought not to be surprized that the Greeks and Romans [a] thought it a necessary art, and bestowed so many encomiums upon it that are unapplicable to our music. We ought not to wonder that Aristides Quintilianus [b] says, "That music was an art "necessary

[a] QUINT. Inst. lib. 1. cap. 12.

[b] Οὐ γὰρ ὥσπερ αἱ λοιπαὶ περὶ μίαν ὕλην πραγμάτων, ἢ περὶ χρόνου διάστημα, μικρὸν χρησιμεύουσα θεωρεῖται· ἀλλὰ πᾶσα μὲν ἡλικία, καὶ σύμπας βίος, ἅπασα δὲ πρᾶξις μουσικῇ μόνῃ τελέως ἂν κατακοσμηθείη . . . . . παισί τε πρόσφορος τοῖς ἐκ μελῳδίας ἀγαθοῖς, καὶ προβαίνουσι τά τε τῆς ἐμμέτρου λέξεως, καὶ ἁπλῶς λόγου

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"necessary for all ages in life, as it taught what "was requisite for children as well as adult "people."

Quintilian says for the same reason [a], that a person must not only know music to be an orator, but that he cannot be even a good grammarian without it, because grammar cannot be properly taught without shewing the use of metre and rhythmus. This judicious writer observes also in another place [b], that in former times the professions of teaching music and grammar were both united, and practised by the same master.

In fine, Quintilian in a chapter where he attempts to prove that an orator should learn at least something of music, says [c]: *It will not be disputed with me, that those who intend to be orators, ought to read and understand the poets. Now does not music preside over the composition of all sorts of poems? If any one should be so unreasonable as to say, that the rules which, generally speaking, a poet observes in composing his verses, do not be-*

λόγου σύμπαντος παραδιδοῦσα κάλλη· προϊοῦσι δὲ τήν τε τῶν ἀριθμῶν ἐξηγουμένη φύσιν, καὶ ἀναλογίων ποικιλίαν· ἁρμονίας δὲ τὰς διὰ τούτων ἐν πᾶσι σώμασιν ὑποφαίνουσα. ARISTID. QUINT. lib. 1.

[a] *Nec citra musicen grammatica potest esse perfecta, cum ei de rhythmis metrisque dicendum sit.* QUINT. Inst. l. 1.

[b] Id. ibid.

[c] *Poetas certè legendos futuro oratori concesserint. Num hi sine musica? At si quis tam cæcus animi est ut de aliis dubitet, illos certè qui carmina ad lyram composuerunt. Hæc diutius* . . . . . Id. ibid.

long

long to music, he cannot however deny that those which he must follow in the composition of verses designed to be accompanied in the recitation, belong to this art. This passage will appear much clearer, after reading what I have to observe concerning the *carmen* or the noted declamation of verses intended for an accompany'd recitation.

In short, all the writings of the ancients demonstrate, that music was esteemed in their times a necessary art for polite people, and that those who had no knowledge of it, were looked upon as persons of no education, like illiterate men in our days who can neither write nor read.

But to return to the musical arts; 'tis a great misfortune we have none of those methods left, which were invented for teaching the practice of those arts, of which there were so many professors in Greece and Italy. Besides, ancient authors who wrote on music, and whose works are yet extant, have said very little concerning the mechanic parts of the subordinate arts, which they considered as easy and common practices, the explication of which was fit only for exercising the talents of a school-master. For example, St Austin, who has composed a work on music divided into six books, says [a], "That he will "not treat of these practices, because they are "things that are commonly known by the most "indifferent stage-players."

[a] *Non enim tale aliquid hic dicendum est, quale quilibet cantores histrionesque noverunt.* AUGUSTIN. de Musica. lib. 1.

Wherefore

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Wherefore the authors abovementioned have written rather as philoſophers, who reaſon and ſpeculate on the general principles of an art, the practice of which is known by their cotemporaries, than as perſons who intend their book ſhould without any other aſſiſtance inſtruct us in the art they treat of.

Nevertheleſs I hope, that with the help of ſuch facts as are related by thoſe ancient writers who have occaſionally ſpoken of the muſical arts, I ſhall be able to give, if not a compleat, at leaſt a clear and diſtinct notion of them, and to explain in what manner the dramatic pieces of the ancients were repreſented.

We have obſerved that Ariſtides Quintilianus reckoned ſix muſical arts, to wit, the *Rhythmica*, the *Melopœia*, the *Poetica*, the *Organica*, the *Odica*, and the *Hypocritica*; but we ſhall reduce theſe ſix to four, reckoning the *Poetica*, the *Melopœia*, and the *Odica*, for one and the ſame art. We have already ſeen that the *Poetica*, the *Melopœia* and the *Odica*, had ſuch an affinity, that Porphyry makes them but one art, which he calls the *Poetica* taken in its full extent.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the rhythmical muſic.

WE have mentioned already that the *Rhythmica* preſcribed rules for reducing all the motions of the body and voice to a certain meaſure, ſo as to beat time. *The rhythmica*, ſays Ariſtides [a], *regulates the geſture as well as the recitation*; it muſt therefore have taught the great uſe that may be made of meaſure and movement. By what we are going to ſay concerning this ſubject, it will evidently appear that the ancients ſet a great value upon this art. St Auſtin ſays [b] in a paſſage of his retractations, where he ſpeaks of his book on muſic, that his principal view in writing it was to ſhew the ſurprizing advantage that may ariſe from meaſure and movement.

The Greeks acknowledged as well as we four things in muſic, the progreſſion of the tones of the principal ſubject, or the ſinging; the harmony or the agreement of the different parts; the meaſure; and the movement. The two laſt were therefore taught by the *Rhythmica*, which Porphyry, as we have already obſerved, divided into the *Metrica* or the meaſurer, and the *Rhythmica* or the art of movement.

[a] Ῥυθμίζεται δὲ ἡ μουσικὴ κίνησις σώματος, ᾠδῆς, λέξεως. ARISTID. QUINT. l. 1.

[b] *Et de muſica ſex volumina quantum attinet ad eam partem quæ rhythmus vocatur.* AUGUSTIN. Retract. l. 1.

Plato,

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Plato, to signify that the movement is the soul of a measured song, says, [a] that *the rhythmus is the soul of metre. Metre*, says Aristotle [b], *is only a part of the rhythmus.* We read in Quintilian [c], if I understand him right, that one measure must not borrow of another; but that he who beats the measure, is at liberty to accelerate or slacken its movement. Aristides Quintilianus observes [d], that according to the opinion of several, the metre differed from the *rhythmus*, as the whole from its part. But as we sometimes say absolutely the movement to express the measure and movement, so the Greeks sometimes made use of the word *rhythmus* to express the *rhythmus* and *metre*. 'Tis taking the word *rhythmus* in this signification that Aristotle says in his poetics, that music makes its imitations with singing, harmony, and rhythmus, as painting imitates with strokes and colors.

The Romans who frequently made use of Greek terms, when speaking of music, doubtless understood the etymology of them, and what changes could have been made by custom in their proper signification. Now St Austin says [e] positively, that it was usual

[a] PLATO de leg. l. 2.
[b] Poet. cap. 4.
[c] *Rhythmis libera spatia, metris finita sunt.* QUINT. Inst. l. 9. c. 4.
[d] Ἐκ δὲ τῶν ποδῶν συνίστασι τὰ μέτρα . . . . . διαφέρειν δὲ τῷ ῥυθμῷ φασιν, οἱ μὲν ὡς μέρος ὅλου. ARIST. QUINT. lib. 1.
[e] *Rhythmi enim nomen in musicâ usque adeo patet ut hæc tota pars ejus quæ ad diu & non diu pertinet, rhythmus nominata sit.* AUG. de Mus. l. 2.

in

in his time, to give the name of *rhythmus* to whatsoever regulated the duration in the execution of compositions.

Nothing is commoner in all languages, than the name of the species given to the genus, and that of the genus attributed to the species. Without departing from our subject, we shall see presently that the Romans gave the word *modulatio* a more extensive sense than it originally imported. They called the singing *soni* or *voces*; the harmony *concentus*; and the measure, *numeri*. When Virgil in one of his eclogues makes Lycidas say to Mæris: "Repeat those verses I heard you sing one evening; "I should soon recollect the *numbers*, could I "but remember the words."

Quid, quæ te purâ solum sub nocte canentem
Audieram, numeros memini, si verba tenerem.
VIRG. Eclog. 9.

All he intends that Lycidas should say, is, that altho' he had forgot the words of these verses, yet he remembered the feet and measure of which they were composed, and consequently their cadence. Wherefore *Modi*, a word which the Latins use frequently, when speaking of their music, properly signified no more than the movement. And yet they frequently expressed the measure and movement by the single word *Modi*, and sometimes they gave the name of *modulation* to the whole composition, without any regard to the etymology of the word.

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Let us shew therefore in the first place that *modulatio* properly signified only the measure and movement, that which is called *rhythmus* by Porphyry; and secondly let us prove, that the Romans gave nevertheless the name of modulation to the whole musical composition. We shall frequently have occasion to suppose that the ancients indulged themselves in this kind of inaccuracy.

Quintilian relates that Aristoxenus, who according to Suidas was one of Aristotle's disciples, and wrote a book on music which is to be found in Meibomius's collection, divided vocal music into Rhythmus and Singing. "The *Rhythmus*," continues Quintilian, [a] "is what we call *modulation*; and the measured or noted singing is "what we distinguish by the name of the tone "and sounds."

Quintilian, to signify that he does not insist upon his orator's having a thorough knowledge of music, says, [b] that he does not require he should be such a master of the modulation, as to beat the measure of the *cantica* or monologues. These, as we shall shew hereafter, were theatrical scenes, whose declamation was

[a] *Vocis rationem Aristoxenus musicus dividit in ῥυθμον & μελος ἐμμετρον, quorum alterum modulatione, alterum cantu ac sonis constat.* QUINT. Inst. l. 1. c. 10.

[b] *Nam nec ego consumi studentem his artibus volo, nec modulatur ut musicis modis cantica excipiat.* QUINT. Inst. l. 1. c. 13.

more

more musical, that is, somewhat more a-kin to singing.

And yet (which is what we have to observe in the second place) Quintilian frequently calls the whole composition *a modulation*, comprizing under this name, the singing, the harmony, the measure, and the movement. For example, this author in the third chapter of the eleventh book of his Institutes, where he gives such curious lessons concerning the care an orator ought to have of his voice, as well as concerning the recitation, says with regard to several bad ways of pronouncing: [a] *There is nothing more intolerable in pronunciation than to hear a theatrical modulation either in private declamation or at the bar. This is, I acknowledge, a fashionable vice, but nevertheless it disgraces an orator.* 'Tis manifest that Quintilian comprises the singing or composed declamation, in the *modulation* abovementioned; for 'tis the whole composition which he calls *modulation*.

In the inscriptions prefixt to Terence's comedies, 'tis said that Flaccus made the modes, or *modulated* them, to signify that Flaccus composed the declamation. *Modos fecit, modulavit Flaccus.*

St Austin [b] accounts in some measure for this custom, by saying, that whatsoever a musician has

[a] *Sed quodcunque ex his vitium magis tulerim, quam quo nunc maximè laboratur, in causis omnibus scholisque cantandi: quod inutilius sit an fœdius, nescio. Quid enim oratori minus convenit quàm modulatio scenica?* QUINT. Inst. lib. 11. c. 3.

[b] *Modulatio, quo uno pœne verbo tantæ disciplinæ definitio continetur.* AUG. de Mus. l. 1.

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to do, is almoſt all compriſed in the word *modulation*.

I might quote ſeveral other paſſages of ancient Latin authors, who have made uſe of the words *modi* and *modulatio* in this extenſive ſignification; but to convince the reader that it was commonly employed to expreſs the intire compoſition, it will be ſufficient to produce the definition of the word *modulation*, given by Diomedes the grammarian before the ſubverſion of the Roman empire. *Modulation*, ſays this author [a], *is the art of rendering the pronunciation of a continued recitation more agreable, and the ſound more pleaſing to the ear.*

In fine, the term *modulatio* among the Romans had the ſame ſignification as that of *Carmen*; a word we cannot tranſlate according to its ſtrict ſignification, which imported the meaſure and noted pronunciation of verſe, becauſe as we have not the thing itſelf, we want a proper term to expreſs it. But we ſhall preſently treat of this *Carmen*; let us return now to the Rhythmica, or the modulation properly ſo called.

'Tis not a difficult matter to underſtand how the ancients meaſured their vocal muſic, or that which was compoſed on words. We have already obſerved, when ſpeaking of the mechanic part of poetry, that the ſyllables had a determined quantity in the Greek and Latin

[a] *Modulatio eſt continuati ſermonis in jucundiorem dicendi rationem artificialis flexus, in delectabilem auditui formam converſus.* DIOMED. de Arte Gramm. l. 2. c. 4.

tongues.

tongues. This quantity was even relative, that is, two ſhort ſyllables ought not to be longer in pronouncing, than a long one; and a long ſyllable ought to be as long in pronouncing as two ſhort ones. The ſhort ſyllable was equal to one duration or time in meaſure, and the long ſyllable was equivalent to two. *The very children*, ſays Quintilian [a], *know that a long ſyllable has two durations, and a ſhort ſyllable but one.*

This proportion between long and ſhort ſyllables was as fixt as that which is between notes of different value. As two crotchets in our muſic ought to have the ſame duration as a minim, ſo in the ancient muſic two ſhort ſyllables had juſt the ſame time as a long one. Wherefore when the Greek or Roman muſicians ſet any piece whatſoever to muſic, all they had to do in order to meaſure it, was to conform to the quantity of the ſyllable on which every note was placed; ſo that the value of the note was already decided by that of the ſyllable. Hence Boetius [b], who lived under the reign of Theodoric king of the Oſtrogoths, when the theatres were ſtill open at Rome, ſays, when ſpeaking of a compoſer who ſets verſes to muſic: *That theſe verſes have already their meaſure by virtue of their figure*; that is in conſequence of the combination of the long and ſhort ſyllables of which they are compoſed.

[a] *Longam eſſe duorum temporum, brevem unius, etiam pueri ſciunt.* QUINT. Inſt. lib. 9. c. 4.

[b] *Ut ſi quando melos aliquid muſicus voluiſſet aſcribere ſupra verſum rhythmica metri compoſitione diſtentum, &c.* BOET. de Muſ. l. 4.

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On the other hand we have obſerved, when ſpeaking of the mechanic part of Greek and Latin verſes, that every one knew from their very infancy the quantity of each ſyllable. They underſtood therefore, without entering into a particular ſtudy for that purpoſe, the value of each ſyllable, and which is the ſame thing, of each note.

Here it may be inquired, what number of durations the Greeks and Romans uſed in the meaſures of their muſical pieces, compoſed on words either in proſe or verſe? I anſwer, that with reſpect to muſical compoſitions in verſe, the meaſure of theſe compoſitions, and the number of durations of each meaſure was already regulated by the figure of the verſe. Every foot conſtituted a meaſure: in fact, we ſhall meet hereafter with the word *pes*, which ſignifies a foot, uſed by Quintilian and others to expreſs a meaſure. There is nevertheleſs one objection againſt this explication; which is, that the meaſures of the ſame piece of muſic would be conſequently unequal in their duration, becauſe the feet of the ſame verſe were not equal. Some had only three durations, while others had four. In fact, the feet compoſed of a long and a ſhort ſyllable, or of three ſhort ones, contained only three durations; whereas thoſe that were compoſed of long ſyllables, or of one long and two ſhort, had four durations. I grant it could not be otherwiſe; but this did not hinder the perſon, who beat the meaſure, from marking it exactly.

With regard to muſical compoſitions in proſe, 'tis plain that it was alſo the quantity of the ſyllable which decided the value of a note placed on that ſyllable. Perhaps the ancients did not meaſure muſical pieces of that kind, but left the perſon who beat the meaſure by following the principles of the *Rhythmica*, left him, I ſay, at liberty to mark the cadence after ſuch a number of durations as he ſhould think proper to join, as it were, under the ſame meaſure. How long ago is it ſince we ourſelves began to write the meaſure of our muſic? 'Tis for this very reaſon the ancients ranked poetry among the muſical arts. Hence alſo moſt Greek and Latin authors who have wrote upon muſic, treat very copiouſly of the quantity of the ſyllables, feet, and figure of verſe, as well as of the uſe that may be made of them in ſtrengthening and imbelliſhing the diſcourſe. Thoſe who are deſirous of knowing how far the ancients have canvaſſed this ſubject, may read what St Auſtin has wrote concerning it in his book on muſic.

Beſides, we learn from Ariſtides Quintilianus, as well as from what other authors have ſaid on this article, that the ancients had a rhythmus in which every foot of a verſe did not always make a meaſure, becauſe ſome meaſures were compoſed of eight ſyllabic durations; that is, of eight ſhort ones or their value. This was a way of remedying the inconveniency which aroſe from the inequality of time in the feet of the ſame verſe. But as this is a point which belongs to muſic pro-

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perly so called, I shall refer my reader to what has been said concerning it by a learned gentleman [a], who has joined a very extensive erudition to a thorough knowledge of this science.

But how is it the ancients marked the value of the notes of their organical or instrumental music, since these notes could not draw their value from the quantity of the syllables on which they were placed? This I can't tell; however, I conceive in what manner a certain value might be fixt in the instrumental music to every *semeion* or organic note, by points placed either above, or below, or on the side: or else by putting on the top of each note one of the two characters which denoted whether a syllable was short or long, characters that every body had learnt at school. We shall treat at large of these *semeia*, when we come to explain how the ancients noted their musical song, or their song properly so called; and that which was only a simple declamation. There is another thing which is still more worthy of our curiosity, that is, the manner how the metrical music marked the durations in all the different gestures of the body. How could the ancients (some will say) write their gestures with notes? How could they contrive to mark each motion of the feet and hands, each attitude and step by a particular figure which should point out distinctly each of those motions? I shall be satisfied here with answering that the art

[a] *M.* Burette *of the Academy of Belles lettres, the fifth tome.*

of writing the gestures with notes; or, if you will, the Dictionary of gestures, (for we shall shew that the ancients had these sorts of Dictionaries, if I be allowed this expression) did not belong to the Rhythmical music, which falls under our present consideration. This supposed the art of writing gestures with notes to have been already discovered and practised; for it was the Hypocritical music or the *Saltation*, which taught this kind of writing. Wherefore we shall defer speaking of it, 'till we treat of the musical art which by the Greeks was called Ὀρχησις, and by the Romans *Saltatio*. How was it possible (some will reply) for the Rhythmical music to subject the comedian who recited, and the player that gesticulated, to the same measure and cadence? I shall answer, that this is one of those things which St Austin says every player knew, for which reason he did not think it worth his while to explain it. But as the thing in question is no longer performed before our eyes, 'tis not an easy matter for us to conceive what St Austin says that every body knew. Tho' the passages of the ancient writers which we shall hereafter produce, prove that the actor who recited, agreed perfectly with the other who gesticulated, and that they fell into the same cadence with the greatest exactness, yet they do not explain the manner they contrived to follow both of them exactly a common measure. We find nevertheless in Quintilian something like the principles, on which the manner of reconciling them was established.

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It seems therefore by reading a passage of Quintilian, that in order to measure, as it were, the action, and to enable the player who gesticulated to follow the person that recited, they had contrived a rule, which was that three words were equivalent to a gesture. Now as these words had a fixt duration, the gesture must have had likewise a determined and measurable duration. The passage is as follows: [a] *Those who first professed composing the declamation of theatrical pieces, and exhibiting them upon the stage, acted very prudently, by ordering that each gesture should begin and end exactly with the sentence. This was right, for 'tis equally absurd that the gesture should precede the speech, or should continue after it is finished. True it is, that our artists aiming at too great ingenuity were mistaken, when they determined that the time necessary for pronouncing three words, should be that of the duration of the gesture. This is what does not naturally happen, nor is it in the power of art to render it easy to practise. But our artists thought it necessary by all means, to prescribe a method which should regulate the measure of the gesture, which is equally disagreable, if it be too*

[a] *Hic veteres artifices illud rectè adjecerunt, ut manus cum sensu & inciperet & deponeretur. Aliòqui enim aut ante vocem erit gestus, aut post vocem, quod est utrumque deforme. In illo lapsi nimia subtilitate sunt; quod intervallum motus tria verba esse voluerunt: quod nec observatur, nec fieri potest: Sed illi quasi mensuram tarditatis celeritatisque aliquam esse voluerunt, nec immeritò, ne aut diu otiosa esset manus, aut (quod multi faciunt) actionem continuo motu conciderent.* QUINT. Inst. lib. 11. c. 3.

slow

slow or too precipitate; and the principle they established is the best they could hit on.

I have translated the word *Artifices*, which Quintilian uses, by *those who first professed composing the declamation of theatrical pieces, and exhibiting them upon the stage*; being induced to give it this signification for two reasons. The first is, that Quintilian does not mean in this passage the professors of eloquence, whom he distinguishes by other names in his Institutes. The second is, that in the chapter where this passage occurs, he speaks very frequently of the practices and customs of the comedians, and gives the name of *Artifices* or *Artifices pronuntiandi* to those whose profession it was to exhibit theatrical pieces. We shall produce in another place one of those passages in which the same author treats very diffusively of the care which those *Artifices pronuntiandi* ought to have, in giving to each comedian a mask suitable to the character of the person he represents.

I shall give here another passage of Quintilian [a], which may throw some light on the rules given by the *Rhythmica* to measure the duration of the gestures. *Every duration of a measure particu-*

[a] *Et quod metrum in verbis modò, rhythmus etiam in corporis motu est. Inania quoque tempora rhythmi facilius accipient, quanquam hæc & in metris accidunt. Major tamen illic licentia est, ubi tempora etiam animo metiuntur, & pedum & digitorum ictu intervalla signant quibusdam notis, atque æstimant quot breves illud spatium habeat, inde τετράσημον, πεντάσημον. Deinceps longiores fiunt percussiones: nam σημεῖον tempus est unum.* QUINT. Inst. lib. 9. c. 4.

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larly conſidered regards only the reciter, who upon beating the time is obliged to pronounce the ſyllable thereto belonging; but the Rhythmus directs all the motions of the body. He that makes theſe geſtures, muſt fall into a cadence at the end of each meaſure, tho' he be allowed to let ſome of the time of this meaſure paſs, without geſticulating, and to throw into his dumb action, as often as he pleaſes, ſome of thoſe ſilences or pauſes which occur very ſeldom in the Reciter's *part. The Rhythmus allows this liberty to the* Geſticulator, *who is ſatisfied, when he uſes of it, to count the intervals he makes, and to mark them for greater certainty, ſometimes with a motion of his finger, and at other times with that of his foot, letting four or five durations paſs without making any motion. This has been the reaſon of their ſaying, when they pauſe,* a repoſe of four or five durations. *Moreover one may ſlacken without any conſequence the movement of the meaſure in favor of the perſon that geſticulates, becauſe notwithſtanding this ſlackening, every ſtroke and riſing made by the perſon who beats the meaſure, is ſtill equal to one duration.*

Tho' the fact, as I have already obſerved, be certain, yet I find it impoſſible to explain ſufficiently the method taught by the *Rhythmica*, to make the actor who declaimed, and the perſon who geſticulated, join in ſuch perfect harmony and concert. Very likely they added another character which denoted the time the geſture was to laſt, to that which pointed out the geſture the player was to uſe.

With

With regard to the movement which the ancients ſet as great a value upon as M. de Lulli, M. de la Lande, and our beſt French muſicians, 'tis, methinks, impoſſible the Greeks and Romans ſhould write it down, as it were, in notes, or that they could fix by means of any character, the preciſe duration of every meaſure. They were obliged undoubtedly, in the ſame manner as we, to depend on the taſte and judgment of the perſon that beat the meaſure, who made a particular profeſſion of the Rhythmica. True it is, that ſome modern muſicians imagined they could find out the ſecret of teaching without a living maſter, the duration of every air, and conſequently of tranſmitting to poſterity the movement to be obſerved in playing it; but it was by the aſſiſtance of a clock that thoſe muſicians fancied they ſhould be able to compaſs their deſign. By marking, for inſtance, how many ſeconds the firſt twenty meaſures of the *Chacone* in *Phaeton* ought to laſt, they attempted to teach the movement proper for beating the meaſure of this air. But without examining into the poſſibility of this project, I ſhall be ſatisfied with obſerving that the ancients could not even dream of ſuch a thing, becauſe their clock-work was too imperfect to furniſh them with ſuch an idea. 'Tis well known that far from having a ſecond-pendulum, they had not ſo much as a clock with wheel-work, and that their way of meaſuring time was by ſun-dials, and hour-glaſſes.

We

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We know that the ancients uſed to beat the meaſure at their theatres, and that they marked the rhythmus, which the actor who recited, as well as the perſon that geſticulated, as likewiſe the chorus's, and even the inſtruments, were obliged to follow as a common rule. Quintilian after obſerving that the geſtures are as much ſubject to meaſure, as the muſical compoſitions themſelves, adds, [a] *That the actors who geſticulate, ought to obſerve the ſigns which are marked by the feet, that is, the beating of the meaſure, with as great exactneſs as thoſe who execute the modulations.* By this he means the actors who pronounce, and the inſtruments that accompany them.

On the other hand we find by two paſſages in Lucian's Ὄρχησις, or art [b] of dancing, a work which contains an encomium on the art of Pantomimes, that there was cloſe to the actor, who geſticulated, a man ſhod with iron ſhoes, who uſed to beat with his feet upon the ſtage. All appearances induce us therefore to believe, that the occupation of this perſon was to beat meaſure with his foot, the ſound of which muſt have been heard by thoſe whoſe buſineſs it was to obſerve it.

[a] *Atqui corporis quoque motui ſua quædam tempora & ad ſigna pedum non minus ſaltationi quàm modulationibus adhibet muſica ratio numeros.* QUINT. Inſt. l. 9. c. 4.

[b] See M. BURETTE's diſcourſe upon the rhythmus.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of organical or inſtrumental muſic.

IT would be unneceſſary to treat here of the ſtructure of ſtringed or wind inſtruments, which were made uſe of by the ancients. The ſubject has been exhauſted, either by Bartholinus junior in his treatiſe of the wind inſtruments of antiquity, or by other learned writers. I think it even proper to defer what I have to ſay concerning the uſe the ancients made of their inſtruments in accompanying the declamation of the actors, to that part of this work which treats of the execution of compoſed and noted declamation. In effect, as one of the ſtrongeſt proofs that can be produced to demonſtrate that the ancients compoſed and noted the ſimple theatrical declamation, is to ſhew that it was accompanied; we ſhould be therefore obliged, when treating of the execution of this declamation, to tranſcribe the ſame paſſages, and repeat the ſame reflections already made uſe of, were we to ſpeak here of the manner of accompanying the recitation. I ſhall confine myſelf therefore to ſay ſomething concerning the muſical compoſitions of the ancients, which were not made for vocal performances, but were to be executed ſimply with inſtruments.

The ancients had the ſame idea as we, concerning the perfection of muſic, and the uſe to which it might be applied. Ariſtides Quintilianus, ſpeaking

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ing of the ſeveral diviſions which the ancients made of muſic conſidered under different reſpects, ſays that muſic with regard to the ſpirit with which it is compoſed, and the effect expected from it, may be divided into that which afflicts us, that which animates us and renders us gay; and that which calms us by quieting our agitations. We ſhall give hereafter this paſſage of Ariſtides.

We have already obſerved in the firſt volume of this work, that ſymphonies, as well as compoſitions of vocal muſic, were ſuſceptible of a particular character, which renders them capable of affecting us differently by inſpiring us ſometimes with mirth, and ſometimes with ſadneſs; one time with martial ardor, and another time with ſentiments of devotion. *The ſound of inſtruments* (ſays Quintilian [a], the beſt qualified writer to give us an account of the taſte of antiquity) *affects us, and tho' it has no words to expreſs itſelf, yet it inſpires us with various ſentiments.*

'Tis by virtue of the laws of nature (ſays the ſame author [b] in another paſſage) *that tones and meaſure have ſuch an effect upon us. Were it not for this, why ſhould the modulations of ſymphonies which utter no words, have ſuch a power of moving us? Will any one ſay 'tis merely by chance that certain ſymphonies upon great feſtivals warm the imagination, by throwing the ſpirits into motion, and others appeaſe and calm them? Is it not manifeſt that theſe ſymphonies produce ſuch different effects, becauſe they are of an oppoſite character? Some were compoſed in order to produce a particular effect, and others for quite the reverſe. When our troops march towards the enemy to give them battle, the inſtruments do not play an air of the ſame character, as when they ſound a retreat. The ſound our military inſtruments make, when we are obliged to aſk for quarter, does not reſemble that with which we charge the enemy.* As the ancients had no fire-arms that could hinder the ſoldiers from hearing in time of action the ſound of the military inſtruments, the uſe of which was to ſignify the general's orders, and animate them to battle; they conſequently made a particular ſtudy of this part of the art of war, which in our times would be quite needleſs. The ratling of the canon and muſketry obſtructs the hearing of the ſignals of a great number of drums or trumpets, which beat or ſound at the ſame time. Now the Romans piqued themſelves above all nations for excelling in military muſic.

Quintilian, after obſerving that even great generals thought it not beneath them to play upon military inſtruments, and that muſic was in great

[a] *Cum organis quibus ſermo exprimi non poteſt, afficl animos in diverſum habitum ſentiamus.* QUINT. Inſt. l. 1. c. 12.

[b] *Natura ducimur ad modos, neque aliter enim eveniret ut illi quoque organorum ſoni, quanquam verba non exprimunt, in alios tamen atque alios motus ducerent auditorem. In certaminibus ſacris non eadem ratione concitant animos ac remittunt: nec eoſdem modos adhibent cum bellicum eſt canendum, & cum poſito genu ſupplicandum; nec idem ſignorum concentus eſt procedente ad prælium exercitu, idem receptui canente.* QUINT. Inſt. l. 9. c. 4.

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esteem in the Lacedemonian armies, adds [a]: *Of what other use are the trumpets and* cornua *in our legions? Is it not even highly probable that a great part of our military reputation is owing to our knowledge of military instruments, in which we excel other nations?*

Livy relates a fact [b] very proper for corroborating what has been here affirmed by Quintilian. Hannibal having surprized the city of Tarentum at that time in possession of the Romans, he made use of a stratagem to prevent the garrison from throwing themselves into the citadel, and to make them prisoners of war. As he had discovered that the theatre was the place for assembling the Romans upon any sudden alarm, he ordered the same air to be played as that which the Romans used upon their running to arms. But the soldiers of the garrison soon perceived by the aukward manner of mouthing the trumpet, that it was not a Roman that sounded, wherefore suspecting some artifice of the enemy, they retired into the fortress instead of repairing to the theatre.

Longinus speaks of the organical music, just as we speak of our instrumental. He says that symphonies move us, tho' they are only simple imitations of inarticulate sounds, and have not a per-

[a] *Duces maximos & fidibus & tibiis cecinisse traditum, & exercitus Lacedæmoniorum musicis accensos modis. Quid autem aliud in nostris legionibus cornua ac tubæ faciunt? Quorum concentus quantò est vehementior, tantò Romana in bellis gloria cæteris præstat.* QUINT. Inst. lib. 1. c. 10.

[b] LIV. hist. dec. 3. lib. 25.

fect

fect being. This author understood by *perfect sounds* (to which he opposes the sounds of symphonies that have but an *imperfect being*) those of the recitatives in music, where the *natural sound* being adapted to the words, occurs in conjunction with the articulate sound. To the passage here cited Longinus adds what follows: [a] *Do not we observe that the sound of wind-instruments moves the souls of those that hear them, throws them into an extasy, and hurries them sometimes into a kind of fury? Do not we see that it obliges them to conform the motions of their body to that of the measure, and that it frequently forces them into involuntary gestures? Instrumental music influences us therefore in a sensible manner, since we perceive it produces the effect intended by the composer. Tho' the inarticulate sounds of this music do not convey words to our ears so as to raise precise ideas; nevertheless the concords and* rhythmus *excite various sentiments in our minds. These inarticulate imitations move us as much as the eloquence of an orator.*

I shall give here a passage out of Macrobius, which to some may appear quite unnecessary, because it is only a repetition of what has been said

[a] Οὐ γὰρ αὐλὸς μόνον ἐπιτίθησί τινα πάθη τοῖς ἀκροωμένοις, καὶ οἷον ἔκφρονας, καὶ κορυβαντιασμοῦ πλήρεις ἀποτελεῖ, καὶ βάσιν ἐνδοὺς τινα ῥυθμοῦ, πρὸς ταύτην ἀναγκάζει βαίνειν ἐν ῥυθμῷ, καὶ συνεξομοιοῦσθαι τῷ μέλει τὸν ἀκροάτην, κἂν ἄλλοις ὅσοι παντάπασι, καὶ νὴ Δία φθόγγοι κιθάρας οὐδὲν ἁπλῶς σημαίνοντες, ταῖς τῶν ἤχων μεταβολαῖς, καὶ τῇ πρὸς ἀλλήλους κρούσει καὶ μίξει τῆς συμφωνίας, θαυμαστὸν ἐπάγουσι πολλάκις ὡς ἐπίστασιν θέλγητρον. LONGINUS περὶ ὕψους. cap. 34.

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on this ſubject by Quintilian and Longinus; yet I have thought proper to produce it in order to ſtop the mouths of thoſe, who ſhould attempt to diſpute that the ancients were ſollicitous of drawing the ſame expreſſions as we do from muſic, and that they had, generally ſpeaking, the ſame idea of this art, as Lulli and La Lande. Since we cannot produce the ſymphonies of the ancients, which have periſhed by the injury of time, we can judge of the merit of thoſe ſymphonies, only by the relation of thoſe that heard them every day, who were witneſſes of the effect they produced, and knew likewiſe with what ſpirit they were compoſed.

The power which muſic, ſays Macrobius [a], *hath over us, is ſo great, that thoſe who ſound our military inſtruments, ſtrike up a proper air for exciting our courage, when we are led to the charge; whereas they play one of an oppoſite character, when we are called off to a retreat. Symphonies inflame us, divert us, diſturb us, and even lull us to ſleep. They likewiſe calm our minds, and afford us comfort under our bodily afflictions and diſorders.*

As the diſtempers of the body are ſometimes cauſed by the agitations of the mind, 'tis not at all ſurprizing that muſic ſhould eaſe and even cure

[a] *Ita denique omnis habitus animæ cantibus gubernatur, ut ad bellum progreſſui, & item receptui canatur, cantu & excitante, & rurſus ſedante virtutem. Dat ſomnos adimitque, nec non curas immittit & retrahit, iram ſuggerit, clementiam ſuadet. Corporum quoque morbis medetur.* MACROB. in ſomn. SCIPIONIS. lib. 2. cap. 2.

under

under certain circumſtances the diſorders of the body, by giving relief to the diſtempers of the mind. That muſic alleviates and even diſpels our chagrin and ill temper, is a thing which every one is convinced of by experience. I am not ignorant that the circumſtances under which muſic may effectually relieve our diſtempers are very rare, and that it would be quite ridiculous in caſe of illneſs to preſcribe ſongs and airs inſtead of purging and bleeding. Hence ancient authors, who mention cures performed by virtue of muſic, ſpeak of them as of very extraordinary events.

In fine, as miracles of this ſort happen ſometimes in our days, the ancients are free from any charge of having been too credulous with reſpect to the cures here mentioned, or of publiſhing lies and fables for true hiſtories. To mention it only by the way, this is not the only point on which our own experience has defended them againſt the accuſation of impoſture or credulity. Has not Pliny the hiſtorian been cleared of ſeveral imputations of this nature, which the critics of the ſixteenth century brought againſt him? To return to the cure of ſome diſtempers by the help of muſic; the Memoirs of the Royal Academy of ſciences, which are not penned by men of too eaſy a credulity, make mention in the year 1702 and 1707 of ſome cures lately performed by the power of muſic.

We find in Athenæus, Martianus Capella, and many other ancient writers, moſt ſurprizing recitals

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tals concerning the wonderful effects of the Greek and Roman muſic. Some moderns, as Meibomius and Bartholinus junior, have collected thoſe facts in their works. I refer the reader therefore upon this ſubject to the collection of ſeveral ancient authors who wrote of muſic, publiſhed and commented upon by the former, and to the treatiſe *De tibiis veterum*, written by Gaſpar Bartholinus. If M. le Fevre of Saumur had ſeen the latter work before he publiſhed his commentary on Terence, perhaps he would not have inſerted his fine Latin verſes againſt the ancient flute, and againſt ſuch as attempt to explain their ſtructure and uſe.

'Tis proper to recollect, upon reading the works here mentioned, that it was on the Greeks and their neighbours that muſic produced ſuch marvelous effects. 'Tis certain that the organs of hearing have a greater ſenſibility in thoſe countries, than where cold and dampneſs reigns eight months in the year. As the ſenſibility of the heart is generally equal to that of the ear, the inhabitants of the provinces ſituated on the Ægean and Adriatic ſeas are naturally more ſuſceptible of paſſion than the French. 'Tis not ſuch a vaſt way from the iſle of France to Italy: And yet a Frenchman obſerves upon his coming into Italy, that the beautiful paſſages of the operas are applauded in that country with tranſports, which in France would appear like the ſallies of a frantic multitude.

On the contrary ſome of our northern neighbours are naturally leſs ſenſible than we of the pleaſure of muſic. Only to judge of them by the inſtruments they

they are moſt fond of, and which to us are almoſt inſupportable, either by reaſon of their too great noiſe, or of their little juſtneſs and extent, their ear muſt certainly be much coarſer than ours. Is it likely we ſhould find any great pleaſure, generally ſpeaking, in a muſical concert performed by trumpets in the very apartment where we are at table? Should we like a harpſichord in our chamber, the touch of which, inſtead of entertaining us with the ſoft ſound of wire-ſtrings, would ring a peal in our ears? I ſaid, *generally ſpeaking*, becauſe as we are ſituated between Italy and the countries abovementioned, 'tis natural ſome of our countrymen ſhould in this reſpect be like the Italians, and others reſemble the northern nations.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Poetica, *or poetic muſic; and of the Melopœia. That there was a Melopœia which did not contain a muſical ſong, tho' it was written with notes.*

WE have ſeen by the enumeration and definition of the muſical arts, that the *Poetica* or poetic muſic, taken in its full extent, formed only one and the ſame art among the Greeks; but that among the Romans it made two diſtinct ones; to wit, the art of making metrical verſes of all kinds; and the Melopœia, or the art of com-

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composing melody. Having discoursed at large in our first volume concerning the rules the ancients followed in the construction of their verses, we shall omit here what relates to the first of those arts, comprized under the name of poetic music; and content ourselves with treating of the second, which teaches the composition of the melody, and the singing or manner of executing it.

Aristides Quintilianus [a] says in that part of his book, where he treats of the Melopœia, that it taught the method of composing songs, and had different denominations, pursuant to the tone in which they were composed. With regard to this tone, one Melopœia was called *Hypatoides* or low; another *Mesoides*, or middle; and the third *Netoides* or high. The ancients did not divide, as we do, the general system of their music by *octaves*. Their *Gamut* was composed of eighteen sounds, each of which had a particular appellation, as we shall be obliged to observe hereafter. The lowest of those sounds was called *Hypate*, and the highest *Nete*. Hence Aristides denominates the low Melopœia *Hypatoides*; and the high one *Netoides*.

Our author after giving some general rules in relation to the composition, and which are as applicable to the simple declamation, as to musical

[a] Μελοποιία δὲ δύναμις κατασκευαστικὴ μέλους· ταύτης δὲ ἡ μὲν, ὑπατοειδὴς ἐστιν· ἡ δὲ, μεσοειδὴς· ἡ δὲ νητοειδὴς, κατὰ τὰς προειρημένας ἡμῖν τῆς φωνῆς διαστάσεις. ARIST. QUINT. lib. 1.

songs,

songs, adds what follows: [a] *The difference between the Melopœia and the Melody consists in this, that the Melody is the song itself written in notes; and the Melopœia is the art of composing it. The Melopœia may be divided with respect to the tone in which it is composed, into the Dithyrambic, the Nomic, and the Tragic. The Nomic (that, as we shall see hereafter, which was used in the publication of the laws) composes in the highest tones; the Dithyrambic, in the middle ones; and the Tragic in the lowest of all. These are the three kinds of Melopœiæ, which may be subdivided into several species, because of some difference there is between the Melopœiæ comprized under the same kind. Such is the Melopœia of tender verses which includes the Epithalamiums; such is also that of comic verses and panegyrics.* Thus the Melopœia was the cause, and the Melody the effect. The Melopœia, strictly speaking, signified the *composition of songs* of whatsoever nature; and the Melody implied *the songs themselves*. Wherefore we ought not to be surprized to meet sometimes with the word *Melopœia*, where they should have wrote *Melody*; since 'tis only the name of the cause put for that of the effect.

[a] Διαφέρει δὲ μελοποιία μελῳδίας· ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἐπαγγελία μέλους ἐστὶ· ἡ δὲ ἕξις ποιητική. τρόποι δὲ μελοποιίας γένει μὲν τρεῖς· διθυραμβικὸς, νομικὸς, τραγικός· ὁ μὲν δὴ νομικὸς τρόπος ἐστὶ πανηγυρικὸς· ὁ δὲ διθυραμβικὸς, μεσοειδὴς. ὁ δὲ τραγικὸς, ὑπατοειδὴς· εἴδει δὲ ἐρῶσι πλείους, ὡς ὑπάρξαι δὲ ὁμοιότητα τοῖς γενικοῖς ὑποδιαλήψει. ἐρωτικός τε γὰρ καλοῦνταί τινες, ὃν ἴδιος ἐπιθαλάμιος, καὶ κωμικὸς, καὶ ἐγκωμιαστικός. ARIST. QUINT. l. 1.

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In order to enter upon the explication of the above paſſage of Ariſtides it will not be amiſs to give ſome extracts of a book which Martianus Capella compoſed in Latin, concerning letters and muſic. This author is indeed later than Ariſtides Quintilianus; but he is older than Boetius who cites him, and this is ſufficient to render his authority of great weight in the ſubject in debate. According to Capella, [a] *Melos*, the word from whence Melopœia and Melody are derived, ſignified the *connection between an acute and a grave ſound.* I cite Capella's text, according to the emendations which ought to be made purſuant to Meibomius's opinion. As the ſimple declamation, as well as the ſong, conſiſts in a ſeries of tones graver or acuter than the preceding tone, and artificially connected, there muſt certainly be Melody in the ſimple declamation, as well as in the ſong, and conſequently a kind of Melopœia, which teaches the method of making the connection mentioned by Capella, that is, of compoſing the declamation. Let us give the whole paſſage at length, in which the above-cited words occur. [b] *The Melopœia is the art of compoſing*

[a] *Melos eſt nexus acutioris & gravioris ſoni.* MART. CAPELLA de nuptiis philolog.

[b] *Melopœia eſt habitus modulationis effectivus; Melos autem eſt nexus acutioris vel gravioris ſoni. Modulatio eſt ſoni multiplicis expreſſio. Melopœiæ ſpecies ſunt tres, Hypatoides, Meſoides, Netoides. Et Hypatoides eſt quæ appellatur tragica, quæ per graviores ſonos conſtat; Meſoides quæ Dithyrambica nominatur, quæ tonos æquales mediosque tuſtodit; Netoides quæ & Nomica*

poſing the modulation. The Melos is the connection between an acute and a grave ſound. The modulation is a varied ſinging, compoſed and written in notes. There are three kinds of Melopœia. The Tragic or the Hypatoides, which commonly uſes deeper or graver ſounds. The Dithyrambic or Meſoides, which employs middle ſounds, and in which the progreſſion of the ſinging is oftner made by equal intervals; and the Nomic or the Netoides, which uſes ſeveral of the higheſt ſounds. There are ſome other kinds of Melopœia, as the Comic, which may be all reduced to thoſe abovementioned, tho' each ſpecies hath its proper tone. 'Tis not only with reſpect to the tone that the Melopœiæ may be divided into different kinds; for if in relation to this tone, they are divided into low, middle, and high; they are likewiſe divided with regard to the intervals they obſerve, into Diatonics, Chromatics, and Enharmonics; and with reſpect to the modes, into Phrygian, Doric, and Lydian.

Our author after adding to what has been here cited, ſome inſtructions relating to the compoſition, proceeds to treat of the rhythmus, having mentioned all he had to ſay concerning the Melopœia.

Nomica conſuevit vocari, quæ plures ſonos ex ultimis recipit. Sunt etiam & aliæ diſtantiæ quæ tropica Mela dicuntur, aliæ Comiologica, ſed hæc aptius pro rebus ſubrogantur, nec ſuas magis poterunt diviſiones afferre. Hæ autem ſpecies etiam Tropi dicuntur. Diſſentiunt autem Melopœiæ ipſæ modis pluribus inter ſe; et genere, ut alia ſit Enharmonica, alia Chromatica, alia Diatonica. Specie quoque, quia alia eſt Hypatoides, alia Meſoides, alia Netoides. Tropis, ut Dorio, Lydio, vel cæteris. Idem ibid.

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To return to Ariſtides Quintilianus, the following paſſage [a] contains what he has further to ſay with reſpect to the Melopœia, before he enters upon the rhythmus. *The Melopœia may be divided under ſeveral conſiderations into different kinds. Some are Diatonic, others Enharmonic, and others Chromatic. With regard to the tone of the general ſyſtem in which they are compoſed, Melopœiæ are divided into thoſe of a high, low, and middle modulation. With reſpect to the mode, ſome are Phrygian, others Doric, and others Lydian, &c. In relation to the manner in which the mode is treated, the Melopœia is divided into Nomic, Tragic, and Dithyrambic. In fine, with reference to the intention of the compoſer, as well as to the effect they are intended to produce, they may be divided into the Syſtaltic, or that which renders us melancholy; the Diaſtaltic, or that which enlivens us and pleaſes the imagination; and the middle, or that which compoſes a proper Melody for calming our ſpirit by quieting its perturbations.*

Of all theſe different diviſions of the Melopœia variouſly conſidered, there is only one that falls under our preſent inquiry, that which divides it into the low or Tragic, the middle or Dithyrambic, and the high or Nomic, and which conſequently makes the ſame diviſion of the melodies. According to Ariſtides Quintilianus, and as we ourſelves have obſerved, the Melopœia was the cauſe, and the Melody the effect. There ought therefore of courſe to be as many kinds of Melody as of Melopœia.

If we peruſe with attention the paſſages of Ariſtides and Capella, where the Melopœia is divided into Nomic, Dithyrambic, and Tragic, we ſhall quickly perceive that it was impoſſible for all their Melodies to be muſical ſongs, and that ſeveral of them could be nothing more than a ſimple declamation. 'Tis viſible that the Dithyrambic Melopœia was the only one that compoſed what we properly call ſongs.

In the firſt place, ſuppoſing that ſome of the Melopœiæ, which were the ſpecies of the tragic kind, compoſed what we properly call ſongs, yet it cannot be controverted that ſome of thoſe ſpecies compoſed only a ſimple declamation. 'Tis not at all probable that the ſinging of Panegyrics, which was one of the kinds of Melody compoſed by the low or Tragic Melopœia, was really a muſical ſong. With reſpect to the ſinging of comedies, which was another kind of tragic Melody, we ſhall produce undeniable arguments hereafter to ſhew, that the ſinging of the comic pieces of the ancients, tho' written with notes, and ſupported by an accompany'd recitation, was nothing more in reality than a ſtrict declamation. Beſides,

[a] Διαφέρουσι δ' ἀλλήλων αἱ μελοποιΐαι, γένει· ὡς ἐναρμόνιος, χρωματικὴ, διάτονος. συντόνῳ· ὡς ὑπατοειδὴς, μεσοειδὴς, ὑποειδής. τόνῳ· ὡς δώριος, φρύγιος, λύδιος. τρόπῳ· νομικῇ, διθυραμβικῇ, τραγικῇ. ἤθει· ὡς φαμὲν, τὴν μὲν συσταλτικὴν, δι' ἧς σκέδη λυπηρὰ ψυχῆς· τὴν δὲ διαστολτικὴν, δι' ἧς τὸν θυμὸν ἐξεγείρομεν· τὴν δὲ, μέσην, δι' ἧς εἰς ἡρεμίαν τὴν ψυχὴν περιάγομεν. ARIST. QUINT. lib. 1.

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ſides, I hope to demonſtrate that the Melody of the ancient tragedies was not a muſical ſong, but a ſimple declamation. Wherefore there was not perhaps in the kind of the tragic Melopœia any one ſpecies that compoſed a muſical ſong.

Secondly, the Nomic Melody could not be a muſical ſinging. It had the name of *Nomic* or legal, becauſe it was principally uſed in the publication of laws, for *Nomos* ſignifies a *Law* in the Greek tongue. Beſides, the tone in which the high or Nomic Melopœia compoſed was very proper for rendering the public crier's voice more eaſy to be heard in the promulgation of the law.

Thoſe who knew how nice the Greeks were in point of eloquence, and eſpecially how offended they were with a vicious pronunciation, find no difficulty in conceiving that ſome of their towns were ſo jealous of the reputation of having every thing done in a polite and elegant manner, as not to let the public crier, who was charged with the promulgation of the laws, have the liberty of reciting them according to his own fancy, leſt he ſhould chance to give the words or phraſes a tone capable of exciting the laughter of jocoſe people. Theſe republics apprehending leſt the miſtakes into which their officer might fall in the pronunciation, ſhould reflect a kind of ridicule on the laws themſelves, had the precaution of cauſing the declamation of thoſe laws to be compoſed; and they even required that the crier who recited them ſhould be accompanied by a perſon capable of ſetting him right if he chanced to commit

mit a miſtake. They inſiſted upon having their laws publiſhed with the ſame aſſiſtance, as that which the actors had (a point we ſhall prove hereafter) who recited upon the ſtage. Martianus Capella[a] giving an encomium upon muſic, ſays, that in ſeveral cities of Greece, the officer who publiſhed the laws, was accompanied by a harper. It would be unneceſſary to obſerve that the reciter and the harper could never join in concert, if the declamation of the reciter were quite arbitrary. 'Tis evident on the contrary that it muſt have been ſubject to rules, and conſequently compoſed. It would not be impoſſible to find ſome facts among the ancient writers, which ſuppoſe the practice mentioned by Capella. We ſee, for example, in Plutarch, that when Philip king of Macedon, and father of Alexander the Great, after having defeated the Athenians at Chæronea, intended to ridicule the law they had publiſhed againſt him, he recited the commencement of this law on the very field of battle, as a meaſured and compoſed declamation. *Now Philip* (ſays Plutarch[b]) *having obtained the victory, was ſo ſeized at firſt with joy, as to fall into ſome extravagances: For after having drunk heartily with his friends, he went to the field of battle, and there he began to ſing in a ſtrain of mockery, the commencement of the decree*

[a] *Quid pacis munia? Nonne noſtris cantibus celebrata? Græcarum quippe urbium multæ leges ad lyram recitabant.* MART. CAPEL. in nuptiis philolog.

[b] PLUTARCH's *life of* DEMOSTHENES. chap. 5.

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propoſed by Demoſthenes, purſuant to which the Athenians had declared war againſt him; raiſing his voice at the ſame time, and beating meaſure with his foot. DEMOSTHENES, SON OF DEMOSTHENES THE PEANIAN, PROPOSED THIS DECREE. *But ſoon after, when his drunken fit was over, and he reflected on the danger he had been in, his hair ſtood of an end.* Diodorus Siculus [a] ſays, that Philip after having drunk too much wine the day abovementioned, committed ſeveral indecencies on the field of battle; but that the remonſtrances of Demades an Athenian, and one of the priſoners of war made him enter into himſelf; and that his concern for what he had done, rendered him more condeſcending in treating afterwards with the vanquiſhed enemy.

Undoubtedly Athens and the other cities of Greece, who chanced to agree in this article with the Athenians, did not order their laws to be ſung, (taking the word *ſinging* in the ſignification it bears with us,) when they cauſed them to be publiſhed.

'Tis therefore my opinion, that out of the three kinds into which the Melopœia was divided, when conſidered with reſpect to the manner in which it treated its mode, there was only one, to wit, the Dithyrambic which compoſed muſical ſongs; at the moſt there were only ſome ſpecies of tragic melody, which might have been properly called ſongs. The other melodies were only a compoſed and noted declamation.

[a] DIOD. SICULUS l. 16. p. 476.

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As this opinion of mine is quite new in the republic of letters, it becomes me to omit nothing that can contribute to eſtabliſh it. Before I produce therefore the paſſages of the Greek or Latin authors, who in ſpeaking occaſionally of their muſic, have advanced things that prove, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, the exiſtence of a melody which was only a ſimple declamation, I beg the favor of the reader to give me leave to tranſcribe here ſome paſſages of thoſe ancient authors, who in treating dogmatically of muſic, have ſufficiently eſtabliſhed this exiſtence.

Doctor Wallis, a gentleman famous for his learning, and for having lived the longeſt of any man of letters in our days, publiſhed in 1699, in the third volume of his mathematical works, Porphyry's Greek commentary on Ptolemy's Harmonics, together with a Latin tranſlation of this commentary. We find by this piece, that the ancient muſic divided all the operations of the voice into two ſorts. [a] The author treats afterwards of the difference we find between vocal ſounds. *One of theſe ſounds*, ſays he, *is continued, namely,*

[a] Καὶ τὴν μὲν ἁρμονικὴν, γνῶσιν φωνῆς ἀνθρωπίνης τὴ κ) ὀργανικῆς κ) τῆς ταύτας παρακειμένης, τίνα τρόπον πεφύκασι κινεῖσθαι φυσικῶς διαιρεῖσθαι, κ) τῷ ἰδίῳ περιγίνεσθαι τέλους, ὁρίζομένων· τὰς δὲ τῆς φωνῆς διαφορὰς ἐξῆς παρειλήφαμεν. Δίττη γάρ φησιν ἡ ταύτης κίνησις· ἡ μὲν λεγομένη συνεχὴς· ἡ δὲ διαστηματική. Συνεχὴς μὲν, καθ' ἣν πρὸς ἀλλήλας διαλεγόμεθα, ὅθεν κ) λογικὴ συνώνυμος καλεῖται. Διαστηματικὴ δὲ, καθ' ἣν ἄδομέν τε κ) μελῳδοῦμεν, αὐλοῦμέν τε κ) κιθαρίζομεν· ὅθεν κ) μελῳδικὴ προσαγορεύεται.. PORPHYRIUS in Hypomnematis ad Harm. PTOL. cap. 1. p. 194.

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that which the voice forms in common diſcourſe, and is therefore called the language of converſation. The other ſound, which is called Melodious, is ſubject to regular intervals, and is that which is formed by thoſe who ſing, or who execute a modulation, and who imitate ſuch as play on ſtringed or wind inſtruments. Porphyry explains afterwards at large the difference there is between thoſe two kinds of ſounds, after which he adds: [a] *This is the principle which Ptolemy eſtabliſhed in the beginning of his reflections on harmony, the ſame as that which, generally ſpeaking, is taught by the followers of Ariſtoxenus.* We have already mentioned who this Ariſtoxenus was. Thus this diviſion of vocal ſounds into continued and melodious, or a ſound ſubject to regular intervals in its progreſſion, was one of the firſt principles of the ſcience of muſic. We ſhall ſee preſently that this melodious ſound or melody was ſubdivided into two ſpecies, to wit, into what we properly call ſinging, and that which was only a ſimple declamation. Martianus Capella ſays: [b] *The ſound of the voice may be divid-*

[a] Τοιοῦτον δὲ σχεδὸν παρὰ πᾶσι τοῖς Ἀριστοξενείοις λεγομένων ὑφὴς καταρχὰς τῷ περὶ τῆς ἁρμονικῆς συμμάτος, ὁ Πτολεμαῖος ταυτὶ παρίστησι. Id. ibid.

[b] *Nunc de prima voce velut de ſonitûs totius parente, dicemus. Omnis vox in duo genera dividitur, continuum atque diviſum. Continuum eſt velut juge colloquium. Diviſum quod in modulationibus ſervamus. Eſt & medium quod ex utroque permixtum, ac neque alterius continuum modum ſervat, nec alterius frequenti diviſione præciditur, quo pronuntiandi modo carmina recitantur.* MART. CAPELLA in nupt. philog. 9.

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ed into two kinds with reſpect to the manner in which it comes out of the mouth: to wit, into continued, and diſcrete or divided by intervals. The continued ſound is the pronunciation uſed in ordinary converſations. The diſcrete is the pronunciation of a perſon who executes a modulation. Between theſe two ſounds there is a middle ſort, which partakes of the continued, and the diſcrete. This middle ſound is not ſo much interrupted as in ſinging; but its motion is not ſo continued as that of the ſound in ordinary pronunciation. The voice produces this middle ſound, when we pronounce what we call Carmen. Now, as we ſhall ſee hereafter, *Carmen* [a] ſignified properly the meaſured declamation of verſes that were not ſung, taking the word *ſinging* in the ſignification it bears with us.

'Tis impoſſible to give a better deſcription of our declamation, which preſerves a kind of medium between the muſical ſong, and the continued pronunciation of familiar converſations, than Capella has done by the name of a *middle ſound.*

I am not afraid of being reproached here with reſtraining the term *modulation* to muſical ſongs, tho' in other places I give it a much wider ſenſe, by making it import all ſorts of compoſed ſongs. 'Tis evident by the oppoſition Capella makes between *Modulatio* and *Carmen*, that he uſes the word *modulatio* in the ſenſe in which I have here taken it, by making it ſignify what we properly call a Muſical Song.

[a] Vide notas MEIB. p. 351.

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Bryennius tells us how this middle ſound or declamation was compoſed. This Greek author is one of thoſe whom Doctor Wallis has inſerted with a Latin verſion in the third volume of his mathematical works. Bryennius's words are as follow: [b] *There are two kinds of ſinging or melody. One is that which is uſed in common converſation, and the other a muſical ſong. The melody uſed in ordinary pronunciation is compoſed with accents; for the voice is naturally raiſed and depreſſed in ſpeaking. With reſpect to ſinging, properly ſo called; that which the harmonical muſic treats of, is ſubject to certain intervals.* This is ſaid with regard to the rules of the Diatonic, Chromatic, and Enharmonic muſic.

It would be unneceſſary to remind the reader, that the progreſſion of the declamation may be made by the ſmalleſt intervals the ſounds will admit of, which cannot be done in muſic. Even the Enharmonic admitted of no leſs than quarters of tones. The above-cited paſſage of Bryennius teaches us not only how the Melopœia that conſiſted of a ſimple declamation was compoſed, but likewiſe informs us how it could be written with notes. Before we enter upon this diſcuſſion, it will not be improper to give a paſſage of Boetius,

[b] Τῶ δὶ μέλους, τὸ μὲν ἐςι λογῶδες, τὸ δὶ μυσικόν. Λογῶδες μὲν ὧν ἐςι, τὸ συγκείμενον ἐκ τῶν προσωδιῶν τῶν ἐν τοῖς ὀνόμασιν· φυσικὸν γὰρ τὸ ἐπιτείνειν τι καὶ ἀνίεσθαι τὴν φωνὴν ἐν τῷ διαλέγεσθαι. Μυσικὸν δὶ ἐςι μέλος, περὶ ὃ καὶ ἡ ἁρμονικὴ καταγίνεται, τὸ διαςηματικὸν τὸ ἐκ φθόγγων τὸ καθ' διαςημάτων συγκείμενον. BRYENNIUS, lib. 3. cap. 10. De Melopœia.

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which poſitively aſſures us that they noted their declamation as well as their muſical ſong.

The ancient muſicians, ſays Boetius, [a] *to ſpare themſelves the trouble of writing the name of every note at length, contrived characters which ſhould each of them denote a particular ſound, and divided theſe monograms into kinds and modes. Wherefore when a compoſer has a mind to write a piece of muſic on verſes whoſe meaſure is already regulated by the value of the long or ſhort ſyllables of which the feet are formed, he has only one thing to do, that is, to place his notes above his verſes. Thus it is that human induſtry has found a method of writing not only the words and the declamation, but likewiſe that of inſtructing poſterity, by means of theſe characters, in all kinds of ſinging.*

Boetius commends therefore the muſicians of former times, for having diſcovered two inventions; the firſt was writing the words and that kind of ſong called *Carmen*, which, as we ſhall ſee hereafter, was only a ſimple declamation; the ſecond was writing every kind of ſong, that is, even the muſical one, of which Boetius is going to give the notes, at the end of the abovemen-

[a] *Veteres muſici propter compendium ſcriptionis ne integra nomina neceſſe eſſet ſemper apponere, excogitavere notulas quaſdam quibus verborum vocabula notarent, eaſque per genera modoſque diviſerunt, ſimul etiam hac brevitate captantes, ut ſi quando aliquod Melos muſicus voluiſſet aſcribere ſuper verſum rhythmica metri compoſitione diſtentum, has ſonorum notulas aſcriberet, tam miro modo reperientes ut non tantùm carmina verbaque litteris explicarent, ſed melos ipſum quod his notulis ſignaretur, in memoriam poſteritatemque durgre.* BOETIUS de Muſica. l. 1. cap. 4.

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tioned paſſage. Thus the declamation was noted as well as the muſical ſong. To judge by the manner in which Boetius expreſſes himſelf, the ancients found out the art of writing the ſimple declamation in notes, before that of noting their muſic. The firſt, as we ſhall ſee preſently, was eaſier than the other, and 'tis reaſonable to ſuppoſe of two arts which have pretty near the ſame object, that whoſe practice is the eaſieſt, was diſcovered the firſt. Let us ſee now in what manner the notes of the declamation, as well as of the muſical ſong, were written: By this means we ſhall better underſtand the ſenſe of the above-cited paſſage of Boetius.

According to Bryennius, the declamation was compoſed with accents, and conſequently it was neceſſary, in order to note it, to make uſe of the ſame characters which marked thoſe accents. Now the ancients had eight or ten accents and as many different characters to diſtinguiſh them.

Sergius an ancient Latin grammarian reckons eight accents [a], which he defines to be marks of the inflexion of the voice, and calls them the helpers or aſſiſtants in ſinging.

Priſcian, another Latin grammarian, and who flouriſhed towards the cloſe of the fifth century, ſays [b] in his treatiſe of accents: *That the accent is*

[a] *Tenores ſive accentus dicti ſunt qui naturalem uniuſcujuſque ſermonis in vocem noſtræ elationis tenorem ſervant, Dictus autem accentus eſt quaſi ad cantus. Sunt autem omnes accentus Latini octo.* SERGIUS Comment. in art. DONATI.

[b] *Accentus namque eſt certa lex & regula ad elevandam & deprimendam ſyllabam uniuſcujuſque partis orationis . . . . . Sunt autem*

is the law, and a certain rule which teaches how to raiſe and depreſs the voice in the pronunciation of each ſyllable. Our author ſays afterwards, that there are ten accents in the Latin tongue, and gives at the ſame time the name of each accent, and the figure by which it was marked. Their names are: *Acute, grave, circumflex, a long line, a ſhort line, a hyphen, diaſtole, apoſtrophos, daſeia, and pſyle.* The proper figure of each accent may be ſeen in the abovementioned book. Iſidorus of Seville [a] writes the ſame thing. As the Latins [b] originally had only three accents, the acute, the grave, and the circumflex; and as the reſt were found at different times, and ſome of the new ones were not perhaps generally received, we ought not to be ſurprized that ſome grammarians reckoned only eight, and others ten. But theſe authors are all agreed with reſpect to their uſe. Iſidorus of Seville ſays [c] in his origins, that the accents were called in Latin *tones* or *tenors*, becauſe they marked an increaſe of the voice and the pauſes.

Unfortunately that work of Priſcian is loſt, in which he propoſed treating at length of all the

tem accentus decem quos ita huic operi dignum exiſtimavi pernotare. Acutus, gravis, circumflexus, longa linea, brevis linea, hyphen, diaſtola, apoſtrophas, daſeia, pſyle. PRISCIAN. fol. 133. verſo.

[a] ISIDOR. Orig. lib. prim. cap. 19.

[b] QUINT. Inſt. lib. 1. c. 9.

[c] *Latini autem habent & alia nomina. Nam accentus & tonos & tenores dicunt, quia ibi ſonus creſcit & deſinit.* ISIDOR. Orig. lib. 1. cap. 18.

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uſes the accents might be applied to. [a] This work would have probably taught us the uſe they were of to the compoſers of declamation. That which Iſidorus has wrote in his origins on the ten Roman accents, does not ſupply the loſs of Priſcian's treatiſe. I apprehend that all a compoſer of declamation did, was to mark on the ſyllables, which according to the rules of grammar were to be accented, the acute, grave, or circumflex accent that properly belonged to them by virtue of their letters; and that with relation to the expreſſion, he marked on the vacant ſyllables, by the help of other accents, the tone he thought proper to give them, in order to conform to the ſenſe of the diſcourſe. What could all thoſe accents denote, except the different elevations and depreſſions of the voice? The ancients applied thoſe accents to the ſame uſes pretty near as the preſent Jews do their muſical accents in ſinging after their manner, or, more properly, declaiming the pſalms.

There is ſcarce any declamation but may be noted with ten different characters, each of which ſhould mark a particular inflexion of voice; and as the intonation of thoſe accents was learnt at the ſame time they were taught to read, there was hardly any body but what underſtood this kind of notes. In this ſuppoſition there was nothing eaſier to comprehend than the mechanic

[a] *Sed nos locuturi de partibus, ad accentum qui in dictionibus neceſſarius eſt, tranſeamus, cujus rei myſterium, Deo præbente vitam, latius tractemus.* PRISCIAN.

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part of the compoſition and execution of the ancient declamation. St Auſtin was in the right to ſay that he would not treat of them, as they were things ſufficiently underſtood even by the meaneſt comedian. The meaſure was inherent, in a manner, in the verſes. The compoſer's buſineſs was only to accent them and preſcribe the movement of the meaſure, after having furniſhed the inſtrumental performer who was to accompany them, with ſome part that was ſimpleſt and eaſieſt to execute.

With regard to that melody which was properly a muſical ſong, we are very well informed how it was written. The general ſyſtem, or as Boetius calls it, the *Conſtitution* of the muſic of the ancients, was divided, according to Martianus Capella [a], into eighteen ſounds, whereof each had its particular name. We have no occaſion to explain here that ſome of theſe ſounds might be in reality the ſame. One was called *Proſlambanomenos*, &c. In order, as Boetius obſerves, to avoid writing the name of each ſound in full length on the top of the words, which would have been even impracticable, they invented characters or kinds of figures which marked each tone. Theſe figures were called *ſemeia* or ſigns. The word *ſemeia* ſignifies all ſorts of ſigns, but it had been particularly adapted to ſignify the notes or figures here in queſtion. All theſe figures were compoſed of a Monogram formed of the firſt letter of the particular name of each of

[a] De Nupt. Philolog.

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the eighteen ſounds in the general ſyſtem. Tho' ſome of theſe eighteen initial letters were the ſame, yet they were drawn in ſuch a manner as to form monograms, that could not be taken one for the other. Boetius has given us the figures of thoſe monograms.

Iſaac Voſſius points out in a treatiſe already mentioned, [a] ſeveral works of the ancients, which ſhew how the muſical ſongs were noted in their time. Meibomius treats likewiſe of this ſubject in different parts of his collection of ancient authors who wrote of muſic, and eſpecially in his preface, where he gives the muſic of the *Te Deum*, written according to the ancient tablature and in modern notes. Wherefore I ſhall be ſatisfied with obſerving that the *ſemeia* or ſigns, which were uſed in vocal as well as inſtrumental muſic, were written on the top of the words, and ranged on two lines, whereof the upper one was for the ſinging, and the lower one for the accompanying. Theſe two lines were not much thicker than thoſe of ordinary writing. There are ſtill ſome Greek manuſcripts extant in which theſe two kinds of notes are written in the manner abovementioned. From hence the hymns to Calliope, Nemeſis, and Apollo have been extracted, [b] as well as the ſtrophe of one of Pindar's odes, which M. Burette has given us with the ancient and modern notes.

[a] De Poem. cantu. p. 90. ISAAC. VOSS.

[b] Hiſtory of the academy of the Belles Lettres, tom. 5. p. 162.

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The characters invented by the ancients were uſed in writing muſic 'till the eleventh century, when Guido of Arezzo found out the preſent method of writing with notes placed on different lines, ſo that the poſition of the note marked its intonation. Thoſe notes were nothing elſe at firſt but points which had nothing to mark their duration; but John de Meurs who was born at Paris, and lived under the reign of king John, [a] diſcovered the method of giving thoſe points an unequal value by the different figures of ſemi-breves, crotchets, quavers, ſemi-quavers, which have been ſince adopted by all the muſicians in Europe. Thus we are indebted to France as well as Italy for the preſent method of writing muſic.

It follows therefore from what has been hitherto explained, that of the three kinds of Melopœia, there was one, namely the Dithyrambic or *Meſoides*, which compoſed muſical ſongs; but that the other two, to wit, the Tragic, generally ſpeaking, and the Nomic, compoſed the declamation.

I ſhall wave treating here of the Dithyrambic melody, tho' more bordering on the ſimple declamation than our preſent muſic, and ſhall refer the reader to what has been ſaid concerning it by a learned gentleman [b] who has exhauſted the ſubject.

To come now to that kind of melody which was only a compoſed declamation, I have no more to ſay in relation to the part of it called Nomic

[a] In 1350.

[b] *M.* BURETTE *of the Academy of Belles lettres*, tom. 5. *of the hiſtory of this Academy.*

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or Legal, than what I have already mentioned. In relation to the Tragic melody, I intend to treat more particularly and diffuſively thereof, in order to confirm what I have ſaid concerning its exiſtence, by facts which will put it out of all diſpute, ſhewing that notwithſtanding the theatrical melody of the ancients was compoſed and written with notes, yet it was not properly a ſong. 'Tis for want of having a right notion of the theatrical melody, by taking it for a muſical modulation, as likewiſe by not underſtanding that the *Saltation* was not a dance after our manner, but a ſimple *Geſticulation*, that the commentators have given us ſo bad an explication of the ancient authors who have ſpoke of their theatre. Wherefore I cannot produce too many proofs in ſupport of a new opinion concerning the Tragic Melopœia and Melody. I ſhall proceed in the ſame manner with regard to my ſentiment (which is alſo a new one) on the *Saltation* of the ancients, when I come to treat of the *Hypocritical* muſic.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Explication of ſeveral paſſages of the ſixth chapter of Ariſtotle's Poetics. Of the Carmen, *or the ſinging of Latin verſes.*

THE beſt way, methinks, to confirm what I have advanced concerning the Melopœia and the Tragic melody of the ancients, is to ſhew, that by following my opinion it is eaſy to underſtand the meaning of one of the moſt important paſſages of Ariſtotle's poetics, which the remarks of commentators have hitherto contributed to render unintelligible. Nothing can be a better argument of the truth of a principle, than to ſee it clear up ſuch paſſages as are extremely obſcure without its aſſiſtance. The paſſage is as follows: [a] *Tragedy is the imitation of an action which is intire and of ſome extent. This imitation is made without the aſſiſtance of narration and*

a Ἔστιν οὖν τραγῳδία μίμησις πράξεως σπουδαίας καὶ τελείας, μέγεθος ἐχούσης, ἡδυσμένῳ λόγῳ, χωρὶς ἑκάστῳ τῶν εἰδῶν, ἐν τοῖς μορίοις δρώντων, καὶ οὐ δι' ἀπαγγελίας, ἀλλὰ δι' ἐλέου καὶ φόβου περαίνουσα τὴν τῶν τοιούτων παθημάτων κάθαρσιν. λέγω δὲ ἡδυσμένον μὲν λόγον, τὸν ἔχοντα ῥυθμὸν, καὶ ἁρμονίαν, καὶ μέτρον. τὸ δὲ χωρὶς τῶν εἰδῶν, τὸ διὰ μέτρων ἔνια μόνον περαίνεσθαι, καὶ πάλιν, ἕτερα διὰ μέλους. ἐπεὶ δὲ πράττουσι ποιοῦνται τὴν μίμησιν, πρῶτον μὲν ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἂν εἴη τι μόριον τραγῳδίας ὁ τῆς ὄψεως κόσμος, εἶτα μελοποιία, καὶ λέξις· ἐν τούτοις γὰρ ποιοῦνται τὴν μίμησιν. λέγω δὲ λέξιν μὲν αὐτὴν τὴν τῶν μέτρων σύνθεσιν· μελοποιίαν δὲ, ὃ τὴν δύναμιν φανερὰν ἔχει πᾶσιν. ARISTOT. poet. c. 6.

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in a proper language for pleasing, whose various graces arise from different sources. Tragedy exhibits to our eyes the objects it intends to make use of in order to excite terror and compassion, sentiments so proper for purging the passions. By a language proper for pleasing, I mean phrases reduced and divided by measures, subject to a rhythmus, and productive of harmony. I said that the different graces of the language of tragedy flowed from different sources, because there are some beauties that result only from the metre, and others from the melody. As the tragic imitation is executed on the stage, we must likewise add foreign imbellishments to the diction of the Melopœia. 'Tis plain that I understand here by diction the verses themselves. With respect to the Melopœia every one knows its power.

Let us examine from whence those beauties above-mentioned proceeded, and we shall find that they were not the work of one, but of several musical arts; and consequently that it is not so difficult to understand rightly that part of this passage which says, that they flowed from different sources. Let us begin with the metre and rhythmus which should accompany a language adapted to please us.

Every body knows that the ancients had no dramatic pieces written in prose, but all in verse. Aristotle therefore means nothing more by saying that the diction ought to be divided by measures, than that the measure of the verse which was the work of the poetic art, ought to

serve for measure in the declamation. With regard to the rhythmus, the feet directed the movement of the measure in the recitation of verses. It is for this reason that Aristotle says in the fourth chapter of his poetics, that the metres are the parts of the rhythmus, that is, the measure resulting from the species of the verse ought to regulate the movement during the recitation. No body can be ignorant, that the ancients on several occasions employed verses of different species in their dramatic pieces. Wherefore the person who used to beat the measure on the stage, was obliged to mark the time in the declamation, pursuant to the species of the verses recited, as he accelerated or retarded the movement of this measure according to the sense expressed in those verses, that is, pursuant to the principles taught by the rhythmical art. Aristotle was therefore in the right to say, that the beauty of the rhythmus did not arise from the same cause which produced the beauties of the harmony and Melopœia. The beauty or agreement of measure, and consequently of rhythmus, was the result of the choice which the poet made of the feet with respect to the subject expressed in his verses.

With regard to the harmony, the ancient actors were, as we shall presently see, accompanied by an instrument in the declamation; and as harmony arises from the combination of sounds of different parts, it was necessary that the melody they recited, and the thorough bass which accompanied them, should perfectly agree. Now

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it was neither the metrical nor rhythmical muſic, but the harmonica, which taught the knowledge of concords. Our author had therefore reaſon to ſay, that the harmony, one of the beauties of a language adapted to pleaſe us, did not flow from the ſame ſources as the beauty ariſing from the diction. The latter proceeded from the principles of the poetica, as well as from thoſe of the metrical and rhythmical arts; whereas the beauty reſulting from harmony was owing to the principles of the harmonic muſic. The beauties of melody flowed likewiſe from a particular ſource, that is, from the choice of the accents, or ſuch tones as are ſuitable to the words, and conſequently proper for moving the ſpectator. The beauties therefore of a language adapted to pleaſe us proceeded from different ſources. Hence Ariſtotle was in the right to ſay, that theſe beauties had a ſeparate origin.

There are ſome other paſſages of the ſixth chapter of Ariſtotle's poetics, which will throw a greater light on our preſent explication. A few lines lower than the paſſage here in queſtion, he ſays[a], *there are ſix things neceſſary to compoſe a tragedy; the fable or the action, the manners, the maxims, the diction, the Melopœia, and the decora-*

[a] Ἀνάγκη δὴ πάσης τραγῳδίας μέρη εἶναι ἓξ, καθ' ἃ ποιά τις ἐστιν ἡ τραγῳδία. ταῦτα δ' ἐστὶν, μῦθος, καὶ ἦθη, καὶ λέξις, καὶ διάνοια, καὶ ὄψις, καὶ μελοποιία. ARISTOT. poet. cap. 6.

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tions. Here our author mentions the cauſe for the effect, by uſing the word Melopœia inſtead of Melody. He ſays likewiſe at the end of this chapter[a], after having given a ſummary account of the fable, manners, maxims, diction, and melody of tragedy: *Of theſe five parts, the moſt effectual is the Melopœia. The decorations form alſo a pleaſing ſpectacle; but it is not ſo difficult to ſucceed therein as in the compoſition. Beſides, the tragedy has its eſſence and merit independent of the comedians and the ſtage.* To which he adds: *Moreover the decorator has generally a greater ſhare than the poet, in ordering the apparatus of the ſcenes.*

Authors were therefore obliged; as orators, to invent the fable or action of their pieces; as philoſophers, to give ſuitable manners and characters to their perſonages, and to make them advance none but good maxims; as poets, to give a juſt meaſure to their verſes, to preſcribe the velocity or ſlowneſs of their movement, and to compoſe the melody on which a great part of the ſucceſs of the tragedy depended. To be ſurprized at what Ariſtotle ſays in relation to the importance of the Melopœia, one muſt never have ſeen a tragedy acted; and to be aſtoniſhed that he charges the poet with the compoſition of

[a] Τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν μία ἡ μελοποιία μέγιστον τῶν ἡδυσμάτων· ἡ δὲ ὄψις, ψυχαγωγικὸν μὲν, ἀτεχνότατον δὲ, καὶ ἥκιστα οἰκεῖον τῆς ποιητικῆς. ἡ γὰρ τῆς τραγῳδίας δύναμις, καὶ ἄνευ ἀγῶνος καὶ ὑποκριτῶν ἐστιν. ἔτι δὲ κυριωτέρα περὶ τὴν ἀπεργασίαν τῶν ὄψεων ἡ τοῦ σκευοποιοῦ τέχνη τῆς τῶν ποιητῶν ἐστι. ARISTOT. poet. cap. 6.

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the melody, one must have forgot what we have already observed and promised hereafter to prove, namely, that the Greek poets composed the declamation of their pieces themselves, whereas the Roman poets flung that trouble upon artists, who tho' neither authors nor comedians, made profession notwithstanding of bringing dramatic pieces upon the stage. We have likewise taken notice that Porphyry for this reason made the composing of verses and melody only one art, which he called the poetic taken in its full extent, because he considered it with respect to the practice of the Greeks; whereas Aristides Quintilianus, who had a regard to the Roman customs, supposed in his enumeration the art of writing verses, and that of composing the melody, to be two separate arts.

But let us hear what one of the last commentators of Aristotle's poetics has said in his remarks on the sixth chapter in relation to those passages which we have here endeavoured to explain [a]. *If tragedy can subsist without verse, it can also do without music. I must frankly own I cannot rightly comprehend how music could have been ever considered as constituting in some measure a part of tragedy; for if there be any thing in nature that can appear foreign and even contrary to a tragic action, 'tis singing. Here I must beg pardon of the inventors of musical tragedies, poems as ridiculous as they are novel, and which would never be endured, had we the least taste for*

[a] DACIER. ARIST. Poet. p. 82.

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the stage, or were we not seduced by one of the greatest musicians that ever existed. Operas, if I may venture to say so, are the grotesque works of poetry, which are so much the more unsupportable, as they are pretended to be regular performances. Aristotle would therefore have obliged us prodigiously, had he explained how music could have been necessary to tragedy. Instead of that he was satisfied with saying, that its full strength was known: *Which shews only that the public was convinced of this necessity, and felt the marvelous effects which singing produced in those poems, in which it occupied only the interludes. I have often endeavoured to dive into the reasons which induced people of such abilities and delicacy of taste as the Athenians, to join music and dancing with tragic actions; and after several researches in order to discover how it could ever appear natural and likely to them, that a chorus which represented the spectators of an action, should dance and sing at such moving and extraordinary events, I have concluded that they followed in this their natural disposition, and contrived to satisfy their superstition. For the Greeks were the most superstitious people in the world, and the fondest of dancing and music; which natural inclination was confirmed by their education.*

I question very much whether this way of reasoning could excuse the taste of the Athenians, supposing that the music and dancing mentioned by ancient authors, as ornaments absolutely necessary in the representation of tragedies were the

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ſame kind of muſic and dancing as ours; but, as we have already ſeen, this muſic was only a ſimple declamation; and this dancing, as we ſhall hereafter prove, was only a regulated geſture. Wherefore 'tis not the Athenians that ſtand here in need of an apology.

True it is, that M. Dacier is not the firſt or only perſon that has been miſtaken on this ſubject; his predeceſſors were deceived as well as he. I ſhall ſay the ſame of the Abbot Gravina, who from his ſuppoſing that the Melopœia of theatrical pieces was a muſical ſong, and the *Saltation* a dancing after our manner, has given in his book of the *ancient tragedy* [a] a deſcription of the theatre of the ancients, which it is impoſſible to underſtand.

I am not ignorant, that Ariſtotle gives the name of Muſic in the twenty ſixth chapter of his Poetics, [b] to what he had called Melopœia in his ſixth chapter. *Tragedy*, ſays he, *draws a conſiderable advantage from muſic and the decorations, which afford us a very ſenſible pleaſure.* But this was becauſe the art of compoſing the melody, which was to be obſerved in the piece, as being no leſs eſſential than the manners, was one of the muſical arts.

This ſame author propoſes the following queſtion in another work, namely, [c] why the chorus does not ſing

[a] Printed in 1715.

[b] Καὶ ὅτι οὐ μικρὸν μέρος τὴν μουσικὴν καὶ τὴν ὄψιν ἔχει, δι' ἧς τὰς ἡδονὰς ἐπίστανται ἐναργέστατα. ARISTOT. poet. cap. 26.

[c] Διὰ τί, ὅτι ἐν τραγῳδίᾳ χοροὶ, οὐθ ὑποδωριστὶ, οὐθ ὑποφρυγιστὶ ᾄδουσιν; ἢ ὅτι τὸ μέλος ἥκιστα ἔχουσιν αὗται αἱ ἁρμονίαι, οὗ δεῖ μάλιστα

ſing in tragedies in the Hypodoric or Hypophrygian mode, whereas theſe two modes are frequently uſed in acting ſome perſonages, eſpecially towards the end of the ſcenes, and when theſe perſonages are to be thrown into an exceſs of paſſion. He ſays, in anſwer to this queſtion, "That theſe two tones are "for expreſſing the violent paſſions of men of "courage, or of heroes who generally act the "principal parts in tragedies; whereas the actors "who compoſe the chorus, are ſuppoſed to be "men of a low ſituation in life, whoſe paſſions "ought not to have the ſame character upon the "ſtage as thoſe of heroes. In the ſecond place, "continues Ariſtotle, as the actors of the chorus "are not ſo much engaged as the principal per-"ſonages in the events of the piece, it follows "therefore that the ſinging of the chorus ought "to be leſs animated and more melodious than "that of the principal actors. For this very rea-

μάλιστα τῷ χορῷ; ἦθος δὲ ἔχει ἡ μὲν ὑποφρυγιστὶ, πρακτικόν· διὸ καὶ ἐν τε τῷ Γηρυονῃ ἡ ἔξοδος καὶ ἡ ἐξόπλισις πεποίηται. ἡ δὲ ὑποδωριστὶ, μεγαλοπρεπὲς καὶ στάσιμον· διὸ καὶ κιθαρῳδικωτάτη ἐστὶ τῶν ἁρμονιῶν. ταῦτα δ' ἄμφω, χορῷ μὲν ἀνάρμοστα, τοῖς δὲ ἀπὸ σκηνῆς οἰκειότερα· ἐκεῖνοι μὲν γὰρ, ἡρώων μιμηταί. οἱ δὲ ἡγέμονες τῶν ἀρχαίων, μόνοι ἦσαν ἥρωες· οἱ δὲ λαοὶ, ἄνθρωποι· ὧν ἐστιν ὁ χορός. διὸ καὶ ἁρμόζει αὐτῷ τὸ γοερὸν καὶ ἡσύχιον ἦθος καὶ μέλος· ἀνθρωπικὰ γάρ. ταῦτα δ' ἔχουσιν αἱ ἄλλαι ἁρμονίαι, ἥκιστα δὲ αὐτῶν ἡ ὑποφρυγιστί· ἐνθουσιαστικὴ γὰρ καὶ βακχική. κατὰ μὲν οὖν ταύτην πασχομέν τι· παθητικοὶ γὰρ οἱ ἀσθενεῖς μᾶλλον τῶν δυνατῶν εἰσι· δι' ὁ καὶ αὕτη ἁρμόττει τοῖς χοροῖς. κατὰ δὲ τὴν ὑποδωριστὶ, καὶ ὑποφρυγιστὶ, πράττομεν· ὁ οὐκ οἰκεῖόν ἐστι χορῷ. ἐστι γὰρ ὁ χορὸς, κηδευτὴς ἄπρακτος. εὔνοιαν γὰρ μόνον παρέχεται οἷς πάρεστι. ARIST. prob. ſect. 9. quæſt. 49.

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" ſon, he concludes, the chorus's do not ſing in " the Hypodorian or Hypophrygian modes?"

I refer the reader to Broſſard's muſical Dictionary for an explication of the modes of the ancient muſic. 'Tis impoſſible to affirm in more expreſs terms than Ariſtotle does in the laſt paſſage, that whatever was recited on the theatre, was ſubject to a compoſed melody, and that the ancient actors had not the ſame liberty as ours, of pronouncing the verſes in their ſeveral parts with ſuch tones and inflexions of voice as they judged proper.

I allow indeed that 'tis queſtioned whether Ariſtotle wrote theſe problems himſelf: but 'tis ſufficient for our purpoſe that this work was compoſed by his diſciples, and that it was always conſidered as one of the monuments of antiquity, and as being compoſed of courſe when the Greek and Roman theatres were yet open.

Since the tones in which we declaim are as different from one another, as thoſe in which we compoſe our muſic; the compoſed declamation muſt conſequently have been made in different modes. 'Tis plain their declamation had ſome modes which were fitter than others for the expreſſion of certain paſſions, as our muſic has modes that are better ſuited than others to this very expreſſion.

That which among the Greeks had the name of Tragic melody, was by the Romans called *Carmen*. Ovid, who was a Latin poet, and conſequently was not himſelf the compoſer of the declamation of his dramatic pieces, makes uſe of the phraſe,

phraſe, *our Carmen and my verſes*, where he ſpeaks of one of his pieces which was acted on the ſtage with applauſe.

Carmina cum pleno ſaltari noſtra theatro,
Verſibus & plaudi ſcribis, amice, meis.
OVID. Triſt. lib. 5. eleg. 7.

Ovid ſays *noſtra carmina*, becauſe there was only the rhythmus and metre of the declamation that belonged to him; the melody being the work of another perſon. But he ſays *my verſes*, *meos verſus*, by reaſon that the thoughts, the expreſſion, and, in ſhort, the verſes belonged intirely to him.

We can produce a paſſage from Quintilian, a writer of the greateſt authority on this ſubject, which will ſufficiently demonſtrate that the *carmen* included beſide the verſe, ſomething written on the top of it, to direct the inflexions of the voice which were to be obſerved in the recitation. He ſays poſitively that the ancient verſes of the Salians had a *Carmen*. But I had better give his own words. [a] *The verſes of the Salian prieſts have a proper modulation with which they are ſung; and as their inſtitution is derived from king Numa, this modulation ſhews that the Romans, notwithſtanding their ferocity in thoſe days, had ſome knowledge of muſic.* Now how was it poſſible

[a] *Verſus quoque Saliorum habent carmen, quæ cum omnia ſint a rege Numa inſtituta, faciunt manifeſtum ne illis qui rudes ac bellicoſi videntur, curam muſices, quantum illa recipiebat ætas, defuiſſe.* QUINT. Inſt. lib. 1. cap. 12.

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for this modulation to have been handed down from Numa's time to that of Quintilian, if it was not written in notes? And on the other hand if it was a musical modulation, why should Quintilian call it *Carmen?* He could not have been ignorant that his cotemporaries were accustomed to give every day, tho' improperly, the name of *carmen* to verses which were not sung, whose declamation was arbitrary, and whose recitation was by the ancients called *reading*, because the person that recited them was obliged only to follow the quantity, and was at liberty to use such inflexions of the voice as he thought proper. To cite one of Quintilian's cotemporaries, Juvenal says to a friend of his whom he invites to sup with him, "that during the time of repast "he shall hear some fine passages read from the "Iliad and the Æneid. The person that is to "read them, continues Juvenal, is not one of "the clevereſt at his business; but that does not "signify, the verses are such as will always bear "hearing with pleasure.

Conditor Iliados cantabitur, atque Maronis
Altisoni dubiam facientia carmina palmam.
Quid refert tales versus quâ voce legantur?
JUV. sat. 12.

But my poor entertainment is design'd,
T'afford you pleasures of another kind;
Yet with your taste your hearing shall be fed,
And Homer's sacred lines and Virgil's read:

Either

Either of whom does all mankind excel,
Tho' which exceeds the other none can tell.
It matters not with what ill tone they're sung,
Verse so sublimely good no voice can wrong.
CONGREVE.

In another passage, Juvenal gives likewise the name of *Carmina* to the simple recitation of the hexameter verses of Statius's Thebaid, which the latter poet used to read and pronounce himself as he pleased.

Curritur ad vocem jucundam & carmen amicæ
Thebaidos, lætam fecit cum Statius urbem,
Promisitque diem; tanta dulcedine captos
Afficit ille animos, tantaque libidine vulgi
Auditur. JUV. sat. 7.

All Rome is pleas'd, when Statius will rehearse,
And longing crowds expect the promis'd verse:
His lofty numbers with so great a gust
They hear, and swallow with such eager lust.
Mr. CHARLES DRYDEN.

Now as Quintilian explains himself dogmatically in the above-cited passage, undoubtedly he would not have used the word *carmen* to express a musical song, nor applied it in a sense so opposite to the improper signification it had received from custom. But *carmen* originally imported quite a different thing, and besides it was the proper word for signifying the declamation, and determined likewise to its primary and true acceptation, by the very passage in which it was used. In fine

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the expression *versus habent carmen* leaves no manner of doubt with respect to the signification which the word *carmen* should have in the passage of Quintilian, and the above-cited verses of Ovid?

The moderns imagining that the word *carmen* had always the improper signification it bears in those verses of Juvenal, where he means nothing more than verses, have mistaken the proper meaning of this word; and this mistake is the cause of their not knowing that the ancients had a composed declamation, which tho' written in notes, was not a musical song. The misunderstanding of another word has very much contributed to conceal this declamation from the moderns. The word I mean is *cantus* with all its derivatives. The modern critics have understood this word, as if it always implied a musical singing, tho' in several passages it imports only a singing in general, or a recitation subject to the direction of a noted melody. They have understood the word *canere*, as if it always implied what we properly call *to sing*. This has been the principal cause of the error they have committed in supposing the singing of the dramatic pieces of the ancients to be a proper singing, because the ancient writers generally make use of the words *cantus* and *canere*, when they speak of the execution of those pieces. Wherefore, before I corroborate my opinion with new proofs drawn from the manner in which the composed declamation was executed on the ancient stage, it will not be amiss,

amiss, methinks, to shew that the word *cantus* signified not only a musical singing, but likewise all sorts of declamation, and even simple recitation; and consequently that when the ancient authors say that the actors sung, this must not however be understood by taking the word *singing* in the signification we generally give it. The reputation of the modern authors, with whom I differ in opinion, requires good authority for my singularity upon this point. I have no reason therefore to apprehend being censured for the multitude of passages I am going to alledge, in order to demonstrate a fact which two or three of them perhaps would have sufficiently evinced.

CHAP. VI.

That in the writings of the ancients the word canere *signified sometimes* to declaim, *and even sometimes* to speak.

STRABO, who flourished under the reign of Augustus, informs us concerning the cause of the improper signification which the word ᾠδὴ and ᾄδειν, that is, *cantus* and *canere*, with their derivatives had at that time. He says, [a] that in the first ages,

[a] Καὶ τὸ ᾄδειν δὲ ἀντὶ τοῦ φράζειν τιθέμενον παρὰ τοῖς πάλαι, ταυτὸ τοῦτο ἐκμαρτυρεῖ, διότι πηγὴ καὶ ἀρχὴ φράσεως κατασκευασμένης καὶ ῥητορικῆς ὑπῆρξεν ἡ ποιητική. αὕτη γὰρ προσεχρήσατο τῷ μέλει κατὰ τὰς ἐπιδείξεις· τοῦτο δ' ἦν ἡ ᾠδὴ λόγος μεμε-

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ages, whatever was composed was in verse, and that as all verses used to be sung in those days, people were accustomed to say ᾄδειν or *to sing*, instead of generally saying *to recite* a composition. After the practice of singing all sorts of poems was laid aside, and the custom introduced of simply reciting some kinds of verses, still they continued to give the name of ᾠδὴ or *singing* to the recitation of every sort of poems. But there is something more than this, continues Strabo; for they went on with using the word *singing* instead of that of *reciting* even after they began to write in prose. Thus they carried it so far at length as to use the expression of *singing prose*, instead of *reciting it*.

As we have not a generical word in our language which corresponds to that of *canere*, the reader, I hope, will be so good as to excuse the frequent circumlocutions which I have already made and shall still be obliged to make in translating it, in order to avoid the ambiguities into which I should fall, were I to use absolutely the word *singing*, sometimes to express the execution of a musical song, and other times to signify in general the reciting of a noted declamation.

μεμελισμένος· ἀφ' οὗ δὴ ῥαψῳδίαν τ' ἔλεγον, καὶ τραγῳδίαν, καὶ κωμῳδίαν. Ὥστ' ἐπειδὴ τὸ φράζειν πρώτιστα ἐπὶ τῆς ποιητικῆς ἐλέγετο φράσεως, αὐτὴ δὲ μετ' ᾠδῆς, τὸ ᾄδειν αὐτοῖς τὸ αὐτὸ τῷ φράζειν ὑπῆρξε παρ' ἐκείνοις· καταχρησαμένων δ' αὐτῶν θατέρῳ καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ πέζου λόγου, καὶ ἐπὶ θάτερον ἡ κατάχρησις διέβη. STRABO Geograph. lib. 1.

Let

Let us produce at present those passages of the ancient authors which demonstrate, that tho' the Greeks and Latins gave the appellation of singing to the declamation of their theatrical pieces, yet this declamation was not a musical singing.

In Cicero's dialogues *de oratore*, Crassus one of the personages, after mentioning that Lælia his mother-in-law pronounced in a plain and simple manner, tho' with too frequent and remarkable accents in her voice, says: [a] *When I hear Lælia speak, methinks I am listening to some of Plautus or Nævius's pieces.* The passage of Cicero, which I have only cited here, shall be given intire upon another occasion. Now 'tis plain that Lælia did not sing in her ordinary conversation; consequently those who recited the plays of Plautus or Nævius, did not sing them. Cicero observes likewise in another work, [b] that *the comic poets rendered the number and rhythmus of their verses scarcely perceptible, to the end they might bear a greater resemblance to ordinary conversation.* This attention to imitate common conversation would have been thrown away, if those verses were to be sung.

And yet the ancient authors make use of the word *singing*, when they mention the recitation of comedies, as well as in speaking of that of tragedies. Donatus and Euthemius, who flourished under the reign of Constantine the Great,

[a] CIC. l. 3. de Oratore.

[b] *At Comicorum senarii propter similitudinem sermonis, sic sunt abjecti, ut nonnunquam vix in his numerus & versus intelligi possint.* CIC. in orat.

affirm

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affirm in a treatiſe intitled: *De Tragœdia & Comœdia commentatiunculæ*, that tragedy and comedy [a] conſiſted at firſt of verſes ſet to muſic, which were ſung by a chorus accompanied with wind-inſtruments. Iſidorus of Seville [b] gives indiſcriminately the name of ſingers, to thoſe who acted tragedies, or comedies. Horace, before he explains in his art of poetry what is requiſite to compoſe a good comedy, defines it to be that which entertains the ſpectators till the ſinger ſays to them: *clap your hands. Donec cantor, vos plaudite, dicat.* Who was this ſinger? who, but one of the comedians? The actor who played in comedy, as we ſhall ſee hereafter. It was common to ſay of either of them; *that he ſung.*

Quintilian complains that the orators in his time pleaded at the bar in the ſame manner as the actors recited on the ſtage. We have already given what he ſays concerning it. Is it to be imagined that thoſe orators ſung in the ſame manner as is practiſed in our operas? In another paſſage he [c] forbids his pupil to pronounce ſuch verſes as he reads in private in order to ſtudy the pronunciation, with the ſame emphaſis as the

[a] *Comœdia vetus, ut ipſa quoque olim Tragœdia, ſimplex carmen, quod chorus cum tibicine concinebat.*

[b] *Sunt qui antiqua geſta & facinora ſceleratorum regum luctuoſo carmine, ſpectante populo, concinebant. Comœdi ſunt qui privatorum hominum acta, dictis aut geſtu exprimunt.* ISID. Orig. l. 18. cap. 45.

[c] *Sit autem lectio virilis, non tamen in canticum diſſoluta* QUINT. Inſt. lib. 2. cap. 10.

Cantica

Cantica were ſung on the ſtage. We ſhall ſee preſently, that the *Cantica* were thoſe ſcenes in the play whoſe declamation was moſt harmonious. Now it would have been of no manner of uſe to Quintilian, to debar his pupil from imitating the ſinging of the *Cantica* in the circumſtances in which he forbids it, had this been a real ſinging purſuant to our manner of ſpeaking.

This ſame author affirms likewiſe in a paſſage which I have already cited, that thoſe who acted in comedies, did not deviate from nature in their pronunciation, at leaſt not ſo as to diſguiſe her in their language; but that they imbelliſhed the uſual manner of pronouncing in ordinary converſation with ſuch ornaments as are allowed by the art. [a] Now I leave the reader to judge whether this be ſinging. In fine Quintilian after having forbidden the orator, in a paſſage already cited, to ſing like the comedians, adds, that his intention is not to prohibit a ſuſtained declamation, or the *Singing* ſuitable to the eloquence of the bar. Cicero himſelf, he ſays, [b] has acknowledged the reaſonableneſs of this kind of diſguiſed ſinging. When Juvenal gives an elogium of

[a] *Actores Comici nec ita prorſus ut nos loquimur pronuntiant, quod eſſet ſine arte, nec procul tamen a natura recedunt, quo vitio periret imitatio: ſed morem communis hujus ſermonis decore comico exornant.* QUINT. Inſt. lib. 11. cap. 1.

[b] *Quid ergo? non & Cicero dicit eſſe aliquem in oratione cantum obſcuriorem? . . . . . Oſtendam non multo poſt, ubi et quatenus recipiendus ſit hic flexus, & cantus.* Idem ibid. cap. 3.

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Quintilian in his ſeventh ſatyre, he ſays among other things that this orator *ſung* well, when he thought proper to take the care and precautions uſed by the Romans to cleanſe the organs of the voice, a practice of which we ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak hereafter.

—— Orator quoque maximus & jaculator,
Et ſi perfrixit, cantat bene.——

JUV. ſat. 7.

Good fortune grac'd his action, and his tongue,
His colds became him, and when hoarſe he ſung.
Mr. CHARLES DRYDEN.

Is it to be ſuppoſed that Quintilian ſung, when he ſpoke in public, taking the word *ſinging* in the ſignification it bears with us?

But, ſome will ſay, when the chorus's of the ancients ſung, this was a real muſic; and when the actors ſung, their ſinging was like that of the chorus's. *Do not you ſee*, ſays Seneca, [a] *how many different ſounds are heard in the chorus's; ſuch as the treble, the tenor, and the baſs? The wind inſtruments are mixt there with men and women's voices. And yet there reſults but one concert from all this mixture; which is becauſe all thoſe ſounds are heard together, without diſtinguiſhing any one of them in particular.* This ſame

[a] *Non vides quàm multorum vocibus chorus conſtet, unus tamen ex omnibus ſonus redditur. Aliqua illic acuta, aliqua gravis, aliqua media. Accedunt viris fœminæ, interponuntur tibiæ, ſingulorum illic latent voces, omnium apparent.* SENEC. ep. 84.

paſſage

paſſage with the alteration only of a few terms occurs alſo in Macrobius; [b] who adds this reflexion to it, a *Concord ariſes here from a diſſonance:* All theſe different ſounds form one ſingle concert.

My anſwer is in the firſt place, that 'tis not abſolutely certain from this paſſage, that the chorus ſung muſically after our manner. I acknowledge it appears at firſt ſight impoſſible that ſeveral perſons ſhould declaim together in chorus, ſuppoſing even their declamation to have been concerted. We cannot conceive that thoſe chorus's could have been any thing elſe but a confuſed multitude. But tho' the thing ſeems impoſſible at firſt view, it does not follow from thence that 'tis really ſo. It would be even preſumptuous to give credit ſo eaſily to our imagination with reſpect to poſſibilities; for we are generally ready to preſume a thing impoſſible when we can find no means of executing it; and moſt people are ſatisfied with giving half a quarter of an hour's attention to the inquiry after theſe means. Perhaps after a month's meditation we ſhould find this very thing feaſible in ſpeculation, and ſix months application would render it abſolutely practicable. Beſides another perſon would, very likely, be able to diſcover ways and means, which are beyond the reach of our capacity. But this diſcuſſion would lead us too far: wherefore I ſuppoſe that the chorus ſung

[b] *Fit concentus ex diſſonis.* MACROB. Saturn. lib. 1. in procem.

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ſome of their part in harmonic muſic, but it does not enſue from thence that the actors ſung alſo.

We our ſelves have ſeveral dramatic pieces in which the actors only declaim, tho' the chorus's ſing. Such are the Eſther and Athalia of Racine; ſuch alſo is Pſyche a tragedy compoſed by the great Corneille and Moliere. We have even comedies of this ſort, and are very ſenſible why we have not a greater number of them; 'tis not becauſe this is a bad manner of repreſenting dramatic pieces.

I ſhall corroborate this anſwer with one reflection. 'Tis that the ancients made uſe of different inſtruments to accompany the chorus, from thoſe they employed in accompanying the recitations. This cuſtom of accompanying with different inſtruments, proves ſomething in our favor. *When the chorus ſung*, ſays Diomedes, [a] *the Muſician accompanied them with choral flutes; but in the cantics or ſoliloquies another muſician anſwered them with Pythian flutes.* Suppoſing however that we are to underſtand the word *Singing* in its proper ſenſe, when treating of the ſinging of the chorus, it does not follow, that we are to take it in the ſame ſignification when ſpeaking of recitations; nor are our proofs and arguments therefore leſs convincing.

[a] *Quando enim chorus canebat, choricis tibiis, id eſt, choraulicis, artifex concinebat: iis canticis autem Pythaules Pythicis reſpondebat.* DIOM. de arte Gram. lib. 3.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Other arguments to prove that the theatrical declamation of the Ancients was compoſed, and written with notes. A proof drawn from this, that the actor who recited was accompanied with inſtruments.

'TIS therefore evident, methinks, that the ſinging of dramatic pieces, recited at the ancient theatres, had neither paſſages, nor *Ports de voix* with cadences, nor ſuſtained quaverings, nor the other characters of our muſical ſinging: in ſhort, it was a declamation like ours. This recitation was compoſed, ſince it was accompanied with a thorough baſs, the ſound of which was proportioned in all probability to the ſound made by the perſon that declaimed. For the ſound made in declaiming is neither ſo ſtrong nor ſo reſounding as that which is made by the very ſame perſon in ſinging. In the firſt place, we do not ſhake or agitate the air ſo much when we declaim, as when we ſing. Secondly, in declaiming, we do not always impel the air againſt parts that have ſo much elaſticity, and that break it ſo much, as thoſe againſt which we impel it in ſinging. Now the air reſounds more or leſs, according as it is broken. This is, to mention it by the way, what renders the voice of Italian ſingers eaſier to be heard

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than that of the French. The Italians form ſeveral ſounds intirely with the cartilages near the throat, which the French ſingers cannot completely form but with the help of the inſide of the cheeks.

I am therefore of opinion that the thorough baſs, which accompanied the declamation of the actors, produced only a very weak ſound. We muſt not form an idea of it from the thorough baſs of our operas; this would only contribute to raiſe groundleſs difficulties on a thing that is abſolutely decided by the teſtimony of the moſt reſpectable authors of antiquity, who were every day ſpectators of what they committed to writing.

Cicero ſays, "[a] that thoſe who were ſkilled "in muſic, could tell, as ſoon as they heard "the firſt notes of the prelude of the inſtru- "ments, whether they were to ſee Antiope or "Andromache; while the reſt of the ſpectators "knew nothing at all of the matter." Antiope and Andromache are two tragedies, of which Cicero makes mention in many parts of his works.

What follows will ſhew that the inſtruments did not give over after having played the prelude, but that they continued, and accompanied the

[a] *Quam multa quæ nos fugiunt in cantu, exaudiunt in eo genere exercitati, qui primo in ſtatu tibicinis Antiopem eſſe aiunt aut Andromacham, cum id nos ne ſuſpicemur quidem.* Cic. Acad. quæſt. lib. 4.

the actor. Cicero after having ſpoken of Greek verſes, the metre of which was almoſt imperceptible, adds, that the Latins have alſo verſes which are hardly diſtinguiſhable as ſuch, but when the recitation of them is accompanied. He gives for example [a] ſome verſes of the tragedy of Thyeſtes, which might be taken, he ſays, for proſe, when they are not heard with an accompanied recitation.

The tragedy of Thyeſtes, from whence he took the verſe given in the latin paſſage underneath, was that which he frequently quotes as written by the poet Ennius, [b] and not that which Varius compoſed on the ſame ſubject.

Cicero in the firſt book of his Tuſculan queſtions, after giving a paſſage from a tragedy where the ghoſt of Polydorus begs that his body may be interred, in order to put an end to the miſeries he endures, adds, [c] *I cannot conceive how this ghoſt could be ſo tormented as he ſays, when I hear him recite dramatic verſes ſo vaſtly correct, and find he joins ſo well in concert with the inſtruments.* I refer the reader to Diome-

[a] *Quorum ſimillima ſunt quædam apud noſtros, velut illa in* THYESTE.

Quemnam te eſſe dicam quam tarda in ſenectute?

Et quæ ſequuntur, quæ niſi cum tibicen acceſſerit, ſunt oratione ſolutæ ſimillima. Cic. in Orat. ad M. BRUT.

[b] *In Tuſc. Quæſt.*

[c] *Heu reliquias ſemiaſſi regis, denudatis oſſibus,*
Per terram ſanie delibutam fœde divexarier.

Non intelligo quid metuat, cum tam bonos ſeptenarios fundat ad tibiam. Cic. Tuſc. quæſt. lib. 1.

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des, [a] for the reaſon why I render *Septenarios* by dramatic verſes.

The ghoſt of Polydorus was therefore accompanied in his recitation. But I ſhall produce two more paſſages from the ſame writer, which are, methinks, ſo very deciſive, that I am afraid the reader will cenſure me for tranſcribing any others.

This author, after ſaying that an orator who grows old may ſlacken his recitation, adds what follows: "Let us cite here Roſcius, that great "comedian, whom I have ſo often quoted as a "model from whom our orators may copy ſe- "veral parts of their art. Roſcius ſays, that he "intends to be much ſlower in his declamation, "when he finds he grows old, and that he will "oblige the ſingers to pronounce more ſlowly, "and the inſtruments to ſlacken the movement "of their meaſure. If a comedian who is "obliged to follow a regular meaſure, conti- "nues Cicero, can eaſe himſelf in his old age "by ſlackening the movement; by a much "ſtronger reaſon an orator is capable of taking "this advantage when he is advanced in years. "The orator is not only maſter of the rhythmus "or movement of his pronunciation; but more- "over as he ſpeaks in proſe, and is not under "the conſtraint of keeping time with any body "elſe, he is at liberty to change the meaſure of "his phraſes as he has a mind; ſo that he never

[a] Diom. de art. Gram. l. 3. c. 21.

"pronounces

"pronounces at one breath but as many ſyllables "as he can utter conveniently." [a]

Every body knows that Roſcius, Cicero's contemporary and friend, was a perſon of ſome conſideration on account of his talents and probity. People were ſo much prejudiced in his favor, that when he happened not to act ſo well as uſual, they were apt to ſay either that he neglected his action, or that he was troubled with an indigeſtion; a complaint to which good actors are very ſubject. [b] In fine, the greateſt commendation which could be given to men who excelled in their art, was to ſay, they were Roſcius's in their way. [c]

The ſame author acquaints us in another part of his works, that Roſcius kept his word, when he grew old. He then ordered thoſe who accompanied him, as well as thoſe who pronounced ſome parts of the play for him (this is a point we ſhall explain hereafter) to permit the movement of the meaſure which they were all obliged to follow, to be ſlackened. *'Tis thus your friend Roſcius*

[a] *Quanquam quoniam multa ad Oratoris ſimilitudinem, ab uno artifice ſumimus, ſolet idem Roſcius dicere ſe quò plus ſibi ætatis accederet, eò tibicinis modos & cantus remiſſiores eſſe facturum. Quod ſi ille aſtrictus certa quædam numerorum moderatione & pedum, tamen aliquid ad requiem ſenectutis excogitat, quanto facilius nos qui non laxare modos, ſed totos mutare poſſumus?* Cic. de Orat. lib. 1.

[c] *Noluit, inquiunt, agere Roſcius, aut crudior fuit.* Id. ibid. l. 3.

[c] *Jam diu conſecutus eſt ut in quo quiſquis artifex excelleret, is in ſuo genere Roſcius diceretur.* Id. Ibid. l. 1.

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(says Atticus to Cicero in this author's first book of laws) [a] *acted in his old age; he made the measures last longer, and obliged the actor who recited to speak more slowly; so that the instruments which accompanied them, were under a necessity of following this new movement.*

Quintilian after speaking against those orators who declaimed at the bar as if they were reciting upon the stage, says, [b] *if this custom must prevail, our orators will be obliged to support themselves in their declamation with lyres and flutes.* What he means here is, that the theatrical declamation is so varied, and there is so great a difficulty in entering with exactness into its different tones, that 'tis necessary when a person wants to declaim as they do upon the stage, to be accompanied by one who can help him to take these tones exactly, and hinder him from making false inflexions of the voice.

This is an expression which Quintilian makes use of, to shew that an orator ought not to declaim like a comedian, because of the ill consequence that follows from declaiming in that manner. According to the idea which the ancients had of the dignity of an orator, it was so improper for him to be accompanied, (a thing which was absolutely

[a] *Ut quemadmodum Roscius familiaris tuus in scenâtute numeros & cantus remisserat, ipsasque tardiores fecit tibias.* Cic. de leg. lib. 1.

[b] *Quod si omnino recipiendum est, nihil causæ est cur non illam vocis modulationem fidibus ac tibiis adjuvemus.* QUINT. Inst. lib. 11.

solutely necessary to those who declaimed on the stage) that Cicero when he spoke in public, would never suffer a musician to play upon his instrument behind his back in order to give him the proper tones, tho' this precaution had been authorized at Rome by the example of C. Gracchus. *'Tis beneath an orator,* says Cicero, [a] *to have occasion for such an assistance in order to enter with justness into the several tones he is to use in declaiming.*

In fact Quintilian relates [b] that this Gracchus, who was one of the most celebrated orators of his time, used to order a musician to stand behind him when he harangued, whose business it was to give him from time to time the proper tone with a wind-instrument. It must be supposed that other orators followed the example of Gracchus, since the flute that was employed for the use abovementioned, was called by a particular name τονόριον. We must not after all this think it so very surprizing that the comedians were accompanied, tho' they did not sing after our manner, but recited only a composed declamation.

In fine, we find in one of Lucian's treatises, [c] that Solon after having spoke to Anacharsis the Scythian concerning the actors of tragedies and

[a] Cic. de orat. lib. 3.

[b] *Contenti simus exemplo Caii Gracchi præcipui suorum temporum oratoris, cui concionanti consistens post eum musicus, fistulâ quam τονόριον vocant, modos quibus deberet intendi, ministrabat.* QUINT. Inst. orat. lib. 1. cap. 10.

[c] Luc. in Gymn.

comedies,

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comedies, aſks him whether he had not alſo obſerved the flutes and inſtruments which accompanied them in their recitations, and (to render it litterally) which ſung with them. We have likewiſe quoted a paſſage of Diomedes, which ſhews [a] that the *Cantica* or Monologues were accompanied.

My conjectures with reſpect to the compoſition played by the thorough baſs which accompanied the actors in declaiming, are that this compoſition was different for the Dialogues and the Monologues. We ſhall ſee preſently that the Monologues were executed at that time in a different manner from the Dialogues. Wherefore I fancy that in the execution of the Dialogues, the thorough baſs played only now and then ſome long notes, which were heard in thoſe paſſages where the actor was to take up ſuch tones as it was very difficult to enter into with exactneſs. The ſound of the inſtruments was not therefore a continued ſound during the Dialogues, as it is in our accompanyings; but only was heard now and then in order to be of the ſame uſe to the actor as the flute was to C. Gracchus. This famous orator uſed this delicate precaution, when he pronounced [b] thoſe terrible harangues which were deſigned to ſet his fellow citizens together by the ears, and which armed againſt himſelf the moſt formidable party of the city of Rome.

[a] *In canticis autem Pythaules Pythicis reſpondebat.* DIOM. de art Gram. lib. 3.

[b] QUINT. lib. 1. c. 12. AUL. GELL. l. 1. c. 11.

With

With regard to the thorough baſs which accompanied the Monologues or the *Cantica*, (which were both the ſame thing, as we ſhall ſhew hereafter,) I fancy it was more laboured than the other. It ſeems that it even imitated, and to make uſe of this expreſſion, that it rivall'd the ſubject. My opinion is founded on two paſſages, the firſt of which is from Donatus. This author ſays in a paſſage [a] already cited, that it was the poet and not the profeſt muſician who compoſed the ſinging of the Monologues. The other is taken from a treatiſe againſt public ſpectacles, which we find among the works of S. Cyprian. This author ſays [b] of the players on inſtruments who belonged to the theatre: *one draws mournful ſounds from his flute; another contends with the chorus who ſhall beſt be heard; or elſe he vies with the actor's voice, endeavouring to articulate his blowing by the help of the ſuppleneſs of his fingers.*

I am not ignorant, that in the opinion of the moſt judicious critics the above mentioned treatiſe on public ſpectacles does not belong to S. Cyprian; wherefore a quotation from it would not be of any great authority, were we diſputing upon a theological queſtion. But with relation to the ſubject here in debate, the teſtimony of this writer

[a] *Modis cantica temperabantur non a poeta, ſed a perito artis Muſices factis.* DONAT. in frag. de Trag. & Com.

[b] *Alter lugubres ſonos ſpiritu tibiam inflante moderatur. Alter cum choris & cum hominis canora voce contendens ſpiritu ſuo, loqui digitis elaborat.* CYPR. de Spectac.

is

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is of ſufficient weight for my purpoſe. All that is requiſite for this end, is that the author of this treatiſe, which has been read and known for many ages, was living when the theatres of the ancients were ſtill open. Now whoever this writer was, he compoſed this work only to ſhew that a Chriſtian ſhould not aſſiſt at the ſhews or ſpectacles of thoſe times; that he ought not, as S. Auſtin ſays, [a] partake of the infamies of the theatre, of the extravagant impieties of the circus, or the cruelties of the amphitheatre. What I have ſaid here concerning the treatiſe againſt ſpectacles attributed to S. Cyprian, may alſo be applied, (to avoid repeating it elſewhere) to ſome writings which go under the name of S. Juſtin Martyr, tho' the critics do not allow them to be his. 'Tis ſufficient that thoſe writings [b] which are very ancient, were compoſed whilſt the theatres were yet open, to aſcertain the facts which I endeavour to ſupport by their authority.

This refined ſtudy of the ſeveral artifices capable of throwing ſtrength and ornament into the declamation, and theſe delicacies in the art of diſplaying the voice, will not be eſteemed as whimſical extravagancies by ſuch as are acquainted with ancient Greece and Rome. Eloquence in thoſe days was not only the road towards making one's fortune, but was likewiſe, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, the faſhionable merit. A young nobleman of the higheſt rank, one whom in a jocular ſtyle we may call *the fine flower of the court*, valued himſelf as much for haranguing well, and for pleading with applauſe in his friend's defence, as the nobility of our days pique themſelves for a ſpruce equipage and a ſmart faſhionable dreſs. His talent of pleading uſed to be extolled even in verſes of gallantry. Horace ſpeaking to Venus of one of thoſe gentlemen of a *ſmart air*, ſays,

Namque et nobilis & decens
Et pro ſollicitis non tacitus reis;
Et centum puer artium
Latè ſigna feret militiæ tuæ.

HOR. Car. lib. 4. Od. 1.

For he is great in charms,
The chiefeſt honor of the bar,
He'll make ſucceſsful war,
And ſpread the glory of thy arms.

CREECH.

We may eaſily form an idea of the great eſteem the ancients had for this profeſſion, by reflecting that the public, whom young people are ſo deſirous of pleaſing, ſhewed as much regard and veneration for a young gentleman celebrated for his eloquence, as for a perſon famous for the military art. In fine, it was faſhionable in thoſe days even for the ſovereigns, to ſpeak in public. They piqued themſelves upon compoſing their own diſcourſes; and 'tis remarkable that Nero was the firſt Roman Emperor who had his harangues made by another hand.

Suetonius

[a] S. AUG. *Serm.* 198.
[b] Ep. *ad* ZENAM.

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Suetonius and Dion inform us that this Prince was so well versed in the art of Declamation, that he acted the very principal parts in the tragedies of Canacea, Orestes, Œdipus, and *Hercules furens*. The first of these authors [a] relates an adventure that happened at a representation of *Hercules furens*, which must have entertained the assembly as much as any comic scene. "A soldier of the "guards, who had not been long in the service, "and was then centinel upon the stage, under-"took to defend his Emperor against the other "actors who were going to chain him, in that "part of the play in which Hercules is hand-"cuffed."

I shall produce here another example, which is of far greater weight. Tacitus relates, [b] that Thrasea Pætus (that illustrious Roman Senator, whom Nero put to death, when after massacring such a number of eminent men he wanted to extirpate even virtue it self) played a part in a tragedy acted at the theatre of the city of Padua where he was born.

[a] *Inter cætera cantavit Canacem parturientem, Orestem matricidam, Oedipodem excæcatum, Herculem insanum. In qua fabula fama est tyrunculum militem ad custodiam aditus positum, cum eum onerari catenis ac vinciri, sicut argumentum postulabat, videret, accurrisse ferendæ opis gratiâ.* SUETON. in NERONE.

[b] *Quia idem* THRASEA PATAVII *unde ortus erat, ludis Cæsticis a Trojano* ANTENORE *institutis, habitu tragico cecinerat.* TACIT. Annal. lib. 16.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Of wind and stringed instruments which were used in the accompanyings of the ancients.

TO return to the thorough bass; we find in an antique Low-relieve what we have already seen in Cicero, that is, that the instruments did not cease after the prelude, but continued to play in order to accompany the actor. Bartholinus junior, who composed at Rome his book on the *flutes of the ancients*, gives us in this work [a] a plate ingraved from an antique Low-relieve, which represents a comic scene between two actors. One of them, who is dressed in a long robe, and seems to be the master, takes hold of his slave with one hand, and with the other he holds a kind of a girth with which he endeavours to strike him. Two other actors, masked as the former, after the manner of the Roman comedians, come upon the stage, at the further end of which we see a man standing who accompanies them with his flute.

This thorough bass was generally composed of flutes and other wind-instruments, which the Romans comprized under the name of *Tibiæ*. They used also some of those instruments, whose strings were stretched in a kind of hollow frame, the concavity of which produced pretty near the same effect as the belly of our viols. According as this

[a] BARTHOLIN. jun. de Tib. Vet. c. 10. p. 220.

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frame was made, and according to the particular configuration of the belly, thoſe inſtruments received different names, ſome of them being called *Teſtudines*, and others *Citharæ*, that is, Lyres or Harps.

As they wanted at firſt to draw from thoſe inſtruments a greater variety of tones than they had difference of ſtrings, they ſhortened the ſtring from which they intended to extract an acuter ſound than that which it gave when only ſtruck over the concave part, by pinching it with two fingers of the left hand, which were probably armed with ivory thimbles, whilſt they made it reſound with the right hand. 'Tis with this hand the players on the lyre held a kind of ſhort bow, which was made only of a piece of ivory, or ſome other hard matter, ſhaped to the uſe for which they deſigned it, and by the Latins called *pecten*. The ancients added afterwards ſo many ſtrings to their lyre, that they had no further occaſion for this artifice.

Ammianus Marcellinus, an author who lived in the fourth century, ſays [a] that there were ſome lyres as big as calaſhes. In fact, it appears that as early as Quintilian's time, who wrote two centuries before Ammianus Marcellinus, each ſound had its particular ſtring in the lyre. *The muſicians*, ſays Quintilian, [b] *having divided all*

[a] AMM. hiſtor. l. 14.

[b] *Cum in cithara quinque conſtituerunt ſones, plurima deinde varietate complent ſpatia illa nervorum, atque iis quæ interpoſuerunt, inſerunt alios, ut pauci illi tranſitus multos gradus habeant.* QUINT. Inſt. lib. 12. cap. 10.

the

the ſounds of the lyre into five ſcales, each of which has ſeveral degrees, they have placed between the ſtrings which give the firſt tones of each of thoſe ſcales, other ſtrings which give intermediate ſounds; and theſe ſtrings have been multiplied in ſuch a manner, that to paſs from one of the five maſter ſtrings to the other, there are as many ſtrings as there are ſcales.

Our ſtringed inſtruments that have a *jugum* or neck, by the help of which we can eaſily draw different tones from the ſame ſtring, which we ſhorten when we have a mind, by preſſing it againſt the neck, would have been much fitter for accompanying; eſpecially as we touch them with a ſtring of a very great length and armed with hair, whereby the ſounds are eaſily connected and prolonged, which the ancients could not effect with their bow. But I am apt to think that they were ſtrangers to ſtringed inſtruments with necks; at leaſt we meet with no ſuch thing in any of the ancient monuments. For this very reaſon, in all probability, the ancients choſe rather to accompany with their wind-inſtruments, than with their lyres, tho' [a] in proceſs of time they gave the latter thirty or forty principal and ſubſidiary ſtrings. And yet they had a vaſt number of ſtringed inſtruments, the conſtruction and uſe of which is loſt. But the wind-inſtruments are ſo proper for accompanying, that we make uſe of them in our thorough baſes, tho' we have viols and violins of ſeveral ſorts.

[a] Onomaſt. Poll.

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Nevertheleſs the ancients uſed ſometimes their ſtringed inſtruments in accompanying thoſe who recited tragedies. This is manifeſt from the ancient *ſcholia* on the Greek Tragic poets, and from a treatiſe of Plutarch on muſic. Horace's art of poetry ſuppoſes alſo this practice; and Dion relates that in Nero's time they made uſe of ſtringed inſtruments in the repreſentation of ſome tragedies.

'Tis eaſy to comprehend, after what has been hitherto ſaid, why the ancients marked ſo exactly at the bottom of the titles of Terence's comedies, the name of the wind-inſtruments they uſed in the repreſentation of each piece, as an information without which it was not ſo eaſy to know what effect ſeveral ſcenes muſt have produced in the execution, or as a neceſſary inſtruction to thoſe who ſhould chuſe to bring them again upon the ſtage. The extent of each kind of flute was very limited in Terence's time, becauſe thoſe inſtruments had then but a ſmall number of holes. Wherefore this inſtruction prevented people's being miſtaken with reſpect to the kind of flute they were to uſe, as well as in regard to the tone in which they were to recite ſeveral paſſages of the comedies of this poet.

They not only changed the flutes, when the chorus ſung, but they changed them likewiſe in the recitatives. Donatus informs us that they made uſe of a kind of flutes which the ancients called *Tibiæ dextræ*, and whoſe tone was very deep, to accompany the ſerious paſſages of the comedy;

comedy; and uſed two other kinds of flutes to which the ancients gave the name of Left-handed, and Tyrian or *Sarranæ*, to accompany the more jocund ſcenes. The paſſages of theſe ſcenes are naturally pronounced with a more elevated tone of voice than the ſerious parts of a play; wherefore the tone of theſe flutes was ſhriller and acuter than that of the right-handed flutes. When the ſcenes were ſometimes ſerious and ſometimes merry, they uſed all theſe kinds of flutes alternately. [a] This paſſage, methinks, throws a great light on the titles of Terence's comedies, which have frequently puzzled the moſt learned commentators.

The Romans, when Donatus wrote, had four different kinds of comedies, purſuant to what we have obſerved in the firſt volume of this work. Thoſe of the firſt ſort were called *Togatæ*, or the long-robed comedies, and were very ſerious; The *Tabernariæ* were leſs ſo: The *Atellanæ* in all probability reſembled the latter in this reſpect; and the *Mimi* were downright farces. We muſt not therefore be ſurprized at the minute deſcription which Donatus gives us, when ſpeaking in general of the flutes they uſed in accompanying the recitation of comedies.

a *Dextræ tibiæ ſua gravitate ſeriam comœdiæ dictionem pronuntiabant. Siniſtræ & Sarranæ hoc eſt Tyriæ acuminis ſuavitate jocum in comœdia oſtendebant. Ubi autem dextrâ & ſiniſtrâ acta fabula inſcribebatur, miſtim jocos & gravitatem denunciabat.* DONAT. fragm. de Tragœd. & Comœd.

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This paſſage of Donatus clears up a place in Pliny, where this hiſtorian ſays, [b] *that to make left-handed flutes they made uſe of the bottom of that very ſame reed, whoſe top was uſed in making right-handed flutes.* As the bottom of the reed was thicker than the top, it muſt have produced a ſhriller and acuter ſound; and the top muſt conſequently have made a deeper and graver ſound. The reaſon of this is to be found in books that treat of natural philoſophy.

But it will be objected here, that I ſeem to commend the ancient actors for a thing that is generally eſteemed a vice; for when a perſon ſays that an actor ſings, he is ſuppoſed to condemn him. I anſwer, that this expreſſion includes a cenſure indeed in our common way of underſtanding it, but this is owing to the limited ſenſe in which we are accuſtomed to uſe the word *ſing*, when we employ it in ſpeaking of the theatrical declamation. 'Tis unuſual at preſent to ſay an actor ſings, except when he ſings unſeaſonably; when he falls injudiciouſly into improper exclamations; and when with ſwelling tones and an emphaſis contradicted by the ſenſe of the verſe, he throws a forced pathetic into his declamation, which is always ridiculous when falſe. An actor is not ſaid to ſing, when he makes a proper application of the pauſes and different accents and tones of the voice; and, in fine, when he employs

[b] *Eam arundinum quæ radicem anteceſſerat lævæ tibiæ convenire, quæ cacumen dextræ.* PLIN. lib. 16. cap. 36.

a de-

a declamation the neareſt to muſical ſinging, in paſſages where the ſenſe of what he recites will permit it. We do not ſay of the actreſs who ſtill favors us with acting now and then the part of Phædra in Racine's tragedy, that ſhe ſings the recital which commences with theſe words:

Juſte ciel! Qu'ai-je fait aujourd'hui? [a]

Juſt heav'ns! alas what have I done to-day!

Tho' her declamation differs then from a muſical ſinging, only becauſe the ſounds which a perſon forms in declaiming are not vibrated ſeparately, nor perfected in the ſame parts of the organs of ſpeech, as thoſe that are formed by a perſon that ſings.

'Tis obvious that the vicious ſinging here ſpoken of, cannot be imputed to the actors of antiquity. They uſed all of them to make, as I ſhall ſhew hereafter, a long apprenticeſhip of their art, and they generally recited a declamation compoſed by men who made this their particular profeſſion.

[a] Tragedy of PHÆDRA. Act 3.

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CHAP. IX.

Of the difference there was between tragic and comic declamation. Of the composers of declamation. Reflections concerning the art of writing with notes.

'TIS incontestable that the tragic declamation of the ancients must have been graver and more harmonious than their comic declamation. Now this comic declamation was more musical and varied than the pronunciation used in ordinary conversation. Quintilian says, [a] "That "those who acted in comedy, imitated indeed "in some measure the pronunciation of familiar "conversation, tho' they did not copy it intirely. "They imbellish, he adds, their pronunciation "by such ornaments and elegancies as the comic "declamation will admit of."

Plato after observing that poets, who attempt to write tragedies and comedies, do not succeed in both alike, adds, that the tragic and comic kinds demand each a particular turn of mind; and he observes also, [b] *That the actors who de-*

[a] *Quod faciunt actores comici, qui nec ita prorsus, ut nos loquimur, pronunciant, quod esset sine arte; nec procul tamen à naturâ recedunt, quo vitio periret imitatio: sed morem communis hujus sermonis decore comico exornant.* QUINT. Inst. lib. 2. cap. 11.

[b] Ἐπεί σου οὐδὲ τὰ δοκοῦντα ἐγγὺς ἀλλήλων εἶναι δυὸ μιμήματα δύνανται οἱ αὐτοὶ ἅμα εὖ μιμεῖσθαι, οἷον κωμῳδίαν καὶ τραγῳδίαν ποιοῦντες. PLATO de Repub. l. 3.

claim in tragedies, are not the same as those who recite in comedies. We find by several other passages of the ancient writers, that the profession of acting in tragedies, and that of acting in comedies, were absolutely distinct; and that it very seldom happened that the same person attempted to appear in both. Quintilian says, [a] That Æsopus declaimed much more gravely than Roscius, because the former professed acting in tragedy, whereas the latter acted only in comedy. Thus each of them had contracted the manners of that kind of the drama which he particularly took up with. This is the very character which Horace gives the latter.

Quæ gravis Æsopus, quæ doctus Roscius egit.

Lucian in his treatise on dancing says, that a tragic actor makes a great stir and bustle on the stage, that he turns and tosses himself about like a frantic person; and that he sings such plaintive strains as are scarce supportable in a woman. Who can bear, continues the same author, to hear a Hercules clad with a Lion's skin, and with his club in his hand, quavering verses on the stage which contain the recital of his labors?

The definition the ancients made of tragedy and comedy, which we have given in its proper place, is sufficient alone to convince us, that their manner of reciting these dramatic poems was very different. I shall be satisfied therefore with

[a] ROSCIUS *citatior, Æsopus gravior fuit, quòd hic tragœdias, ille comœdias egit.* QUINT. Inst. lib. 11. cap. 3.

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adding to what has been already said, that the actors who played in comedy, were shod with a kind of sandal called *soccus*, whereas those who declaimed in tragedy, [a] put on the *cothurnus*, a kind of buskin, the sole of which was of very thick wood, which made them appear of a taller size than the generality of men, according to the relation of Lucian, Philostratus, and several other writers who saw them every day. Lucian informs us, [b] that they used to quilt their body, in order to make their enormous height appear proportionable; and what he advances concerning this subject, is confirmed in a letter attributed to Justin martyr [c].

The dresses, masks, and decorations used in the representation of tragedies, [d] were likewise different from those that were used in comedies. In particular with regard to the decorations; those that were used in tragedy, [e] represented palaces and other superb edifices; whereas comic decorations exhibited only private houses and other plain buildings. In fine, Horace and all the authors of antiquity who speak occasionally of the tragic declamation of the ancients, make use of expressions which plainly indicate that it was a kind of *singing*. This is one of the objections alledged against it by those ancient authors, who for several reasons had a dislike to it. Justin martyr

[a] Vita APOLLON. l. 6. [b] LUCIAN. in Orchesi.
[c] Epist. ad ZENAM & SARENUM.
[d] Onom. POLL. lib. 4. cap. 8.
[e] VITRUV. lib. 5. cap. 8.

in

in the abovementioned work, mentions it as a kind of *bawling* [a]. The author of a treatise against [b] the spectacles of the ancients, attributed to St Cyprian, calls it *the noisy raving of a tragic voice.* Tertullian in a little work composed on the same subject, says, [c] that *the tragic actor raises his voice as loud as he can.* Apuleius [d] makes use of the same terms to express the same thing: *the comedian recites, but the tragedian rants.* Lucian, who has given us a curious description of tragic and comic personages in the conversation between Solon and Anacharsis, makes the Tartarian philosopher say, [e] that the comic actors do not declaim with so much emphasis as those who recite tragedies.

Wherefore we see Quintilian vexed to that degree, as to rail openly against those professors of eloquence, who made their scholars sing or declaim, in the same manner as the actors declaimed on the stage. He inveighs likewise against the orators who pleaded thus at the bar. [f] 'Tis not from any whimsical antipathy against the comedians that Quintilian forbids his orators to imitate a theatrical declamation; he had no more aversion to them than Cicero. He tells us that

[a] JUST. mart. Ep. ad ZENAM & SARENUM.
[b] *Illas magnas tragicæ vocis insanias.* S. CYPR. de spectac.
[c] *Tragœdo vociferante.* TERTUL. de Spectac.
[d] *Comœdus fermocinatur, tragœdus vociferatur.* APUL. florid. l. 3.
[e] LUCIAN. in Gymn.
[f] QUINT. Inst. lib. 11. c. 3.

Demosthenes

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Demoſthenes was obliged to Andronicus the comedian for declaiming as well as he did; and he not only allows his pupil, who is deſirous of advancing in eloquence, to learn the art of geſture, but he even conſents to his receiving leſſons a little while from a comedian, [a] and to his ſtudying under this maſter the principles of the art of pronunciation. In another paſſage [b] he ſays, his eleve ought to learn many things of a comedian.

I ſhall proceed with giving here ſeveral paſſages of the ancient authors, which will contribute, methinks, to eſtabliſh my opinion, or at leaſt will help to clear up the matter. Theſe paſſages have not been as much attended to as they deſerved, becauſe they are buried, as it were, in the ſeveral ſubjects, which occaſioned thoſe authors to write. The quotations I ſhall make will command more attention, when collected together, becauſe of the aſſiſtance they will lend one another towards diſpelling the obſcurity in which they ſeem to be involved.

Whoſoever is acquainted with ancient Greece, is not ſurprized to hear that the poets themſelves made the declamation of their pieces. *Thoſe who were formerly muſicians, were likewiſe poets*, ſays Cicero, [c] ſpeaking of the ancient Greek poets who had found out the ſinging and different ſpecies of verſes.

[a] *Dandum aliquid comœdo quoque, dum catenus quatenus pronunciandi ſcientiam futurus orator deſiderat.* QUINT. Inſt. lib. 1. cap. 3.

[b] *Debet etiam docere comœdus quomodo narrandum, &c.* Idem ibid. l. 1. cap. 10.

[c] *Muſici qui erant quondam iidem poetæ.* Cic. de orat. lib. 3.

The art of compoſing the declamation of theatrical pieces was a particular profeſſion at Rome. In the titles prefixt to Terence's comedies, we ſee the name of the perſon who compoſed the declamation, in Latin, *qui fecerat modos*; together with the names of the author of the poem, and the chief of the company of comedians. I have already acquainted the reader of the uſe which was generally made of the word *modos*. It was cuſtomary, according to Donatus, [a] for the perſon who compoſed the declamation of a piece, to prefix his name to it in conjunction with the names of the poet and the principal player. The declamation eſpecially of the *Cantica* or Monologues which was executed in a particular manner, as we ſhall explain hereafter, was never ſet to muſic by the poet, but by men grown perfect in the knowledge of the muſical arts, and whoſe profeſſion it was to repreſent the dramatic pieces that were compoſed by others. Theſe are the artiſts whom Quintilian calls *artifices pronuntiandi* in a paſſage which we ſhall produce hereafter. Donatus, whom we have juſt now cited, ſays, [b] *the* cantica *were ſet to muſic, not by the poet, but by a perſon ſkilled in muſic.*

[a] *Qui modos faciebat, nomen in principio fabulæ & ſcriptoris & actorii & ſuum ſuperimponebat.* DONAT. fragm. de trag. & comœd. juxta emendationem GERARDI VOSSII Poet. lib. 2. cap. 28.

[b] *Modis cantica temperabantur, non a poeta, ſed a perito artis muſices factis.* Id. ibid.

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Cicero makes uſe of the ſame expreſſion, *facere modos*, to ſignify thoſe who compoſed the declamation of theatrical pieces. After obſerving that Roſcius purpoſely declaimed ſome parts with a more careleſs geſture, than the ſenſe of the verſes ſeemed to require: and after ſaying that the ſame Roſcius threw a kind of ſhade into his action in order to render the beauty of ſome paſſages more conſpicuous, he adds, " the ſucceſs of " this practice is ſo certain, that the poets and " compoſers of declamation have taken notice of " it as well as the comedians; and they all know " how to make a proper uſe of it [a]."

Thoſe compoſers of declamation artificially raiſed, depreſſed, and varied the recitation. The actors were obliged ſometimes to pronounce a paſſage according to the notes, lower than the ſenſe ſeemed to require; but this, that the higher tone, to which he was obliged to mount

[a] *Nunquam agit hunc verſum Roſcius eo geſtu quo poteſt.*
Nam ſapiens virtuti honorem, præmium, haud prædam petit.
Sed abjicit prorſus ut in proximos,
Ecquid video? ferro ſeptus poſſidet ædes ſacras,
Incidat, aſpiciat, admiretur, ſtupeſcat.
Quid ille alter? Quid petam præſidii?
Quam leniter, quam remiſſè, quam non actuosè? inflat enim,
O Pater! O Patria! O Priami domus!
In quo commoveri tanta actio non poſſet, ſi eſſet conſumpta ſuperiore motu & exhauſta. Neque id actores priùs viderunt quàm ipſi poetæ, quam denique illi etiam qui fecerunt modos a quibus utriſque ſummittitur aliquid, deinde augetur, extenuatur, inflatur, variatur, diſtinguitur. Cic. de orat. lib. 3.

at the third ſubſequent verſe, ſhould make a greater impreſſion. 'Tis thus the actreſs performed, whom Racine himſelf taught to play the part of Monimia in Mithridates. Racine, who was as great a declaimer as poet, learnt her to lower her voice in pronouncing the following verſes, more a great deal than the ſenſe ſeems to require.

——*Si le ſort ne m'eut donnée à vous,*
Mon bonheur dépendoit de l'avoir pour époux.
Avant que votre amour m'eut envoyé ce gage,
Nous nous aimions [a].

Had not the fates at length decreed me thine,
I ſhould have liked, in happy wedlock join'd,
His chaſt embrace: Before you deigned to love
Your ſlave, my lord; we fondly lov'd each other.

In order to enable her to take a tone with eaſe an octave above that in which ſhe had ſaid theſe words, *Nous nous aimions, we fondly loved each other*; ſo as to pronounce *Seigneur, vous changez de viſage, My lord, you change countenance*, an octave higher. This extraordinary *port de voix* in the declamation, was admirably well calculated to expreſs the diſorder of mind in which Monimia muſt have been at the moment ſhe perceived, that her facility in believing Mithridates, who wanted only to get her ſecret out of her, had thrown herſelf and her lover into the greateſt extremity of danger.

To underſtand the paſſages of the ancients, which treat of their theatrical repreſentations, it is

[a] Act 3. Scene 3.

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neceſſary, methinks, to have a knowledge of what paſſes at our modern theatres, and even to conſult ſuch as profeſs the arts that have ſome relation at leaſt to thoſe in uſe among the ancients, but whoſe practice at preſent is loſt. Such were the art of geſture, and that of compoſing and writing the declamation with notes. The commentaries written upon theſe paſſages by ſome learned gentlemen, whoſe knowlede of life was confined to their cloſets, afford us but very little light towards clearing them up. I ſhould be as well pleaſed with reading a commentary upon Tacitus, written by a Carthuſian monk.

We are informed by Quintilian, that thoſe *qui faciebant modos*, or the compoſers of declamation, were afterwards called *artifices pronuntiandi*, that is, tranſlating it litterally, *the artiſts of pronunciation*. *Wherefore*, ſays Quintilian, [a] *in pieces compoſed for the ſtage, the artiſts of pronunciation*, &c. I ſhall give this paſſage intire, when I come to treat of the maſks uſed by the ancient comedians.

We ſhall find no difficulty in conceiving how the ancients contrived to compoſe the declamation, even that of comedies, when we come to reflect that in their muſic the progreſſions were made by leſſer intervals than the very ſmalleſt that are now in uſe. With regard to the manner of writing this declamation we have obſerved

[a] *Itaque in iis quæ ad ſcenam componuntur fabulis, artifices pronuntiandi, &c.* QUINT. Inſt. lib. 11. cap. 3.

already

already in the fourth chapter of this volume, that in all probability it was marked with the characters of the accents. The art of writing modulations of all kinds in notes, was very ancient at Rome, even in Cicero's time; having been known there long before the theatres were eſtabliſhed. Cicero, after mentioning the uſe the Pythagoreans made, in ſome meaſure, of muſic in their regimen; and after obſerving that Numa the ſecond king of the Romans had borrowed of the Pythagorean ſchool ſeveral cuſtoms which he introduced into his little territories; cites [a] as a proof of what he had advanced, the practice of ſinging at table the praiſes of great men, in concert with wind-inſtruments. This ſhews, continues our author, that the art of noting the tones of ſongs and the declamation of verſes, was known in thoſe times. We have explained already what the Romans underſtood by the word *Carmen*. The ſame author ſays in another place [b], ſpeaking of the pleaſures that are left to thoſe who have had the misfortune of loſing their hearing, that if they are fond of fine ſongs, perhaps they will have more pleaſure in reading them, than they could

[a] *Morem apud majores tunc epularum fuiſſe, ut deinceps qui accubarent, cantrent ad tibiam clarorum virorum laudes atque virtutes; ex quo perſpicuum eſt cantus tunc fuiſſe deſcriptos vocum ſuis, & carmina; quanquam id quidem etiam duodecim tabulæ declarant, condi jam tum ſolitum eſſe carmen.* CIC. Quæſt. Tuſc. l. 4.

[b] *Et ſi cantus eos forte delectant, majorem percipi poſſe legendis his quàm audiendis voluptatem.* CIC. Quæſt. Tuſc. l. 5.

enjoy

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enjoy in hearing them ſung. Cicero ſuppoſes here, that generally ſpeaking every body knew enough to be able to read a part of thoſe ſongs, and that they were conſequently written moſt of them with accents.

But I ſhall give here a paſſage from Livy the hiſtorian, which alone is ſufficient to evince, that the ancients compoſed and noted the declamation of their theatrical pieces, and that it was accompanied in the execution with wind-inſtruments. This author in his ſeventh book makes a ſhort diſſertation on the origin and hiſtory of the theatrical repreſentations at Rome. After obſerving that in the year *U. C.* 390, the city was afflicted with a peſtilence, and that in order to make it ceaſe, they celebrated thoſe ſhows which conſiſted in the repreſentation of theatrical pieces, he adds what follows: [a] *Theſe repreſentations were then a new entertainment at Rome, the people having been uſed only to the ſpectacles of the Circus. Wherefore they were obliged to ſend for comedians from Tuſcany, who acted on our ſtage according to the manner of their own country, that is, adapting their geſtures to the wind-inſtruments, and reciting verſes which*

[a] *Ludi quoque ſcenici nova res bellicoſo populo (nam Circi modò ſpectaculum fuerat) inter alia cœleſtis iræ placamina inſtituti dicuntur. Cæterum parva quoque, ut principia ferme omnia, & ea ipſa peregrina res fuit; ſine carmine ullo, ſine imitandorum carminum actu, ludiones ex Hetruria acciti, ad tibicinis modos ſaltantes, haud indecoros motus more Tuſco dabant. Imitari deinde eos juventus, ſimul incunditis inter ſe jocularia fundentes verſibus, cæpere: nec abſoni a voce motus erant . . . . . Nomen hiſtrionibus inditum, qui non ſicut ante Feſcennino verſu ſimilem, incompoſitum temerè ac rudem alternis jaciebant, ſed impletas modis ſatyras, deſcripto jam ad tibicinem cantu, motuque congruenti peragebant.* Liv. hiſt. dec. 1. l. 7.

that had not yet any compoſed declamation, to which our comedians were obliged to accommodate their action. But the art of theatrical repreſentations, which our youth grew vaſtly fond of, was ſoon brought to perfection. At firſt they recited extempore verſes, but ſoon after they learnt to write regular pieces; and as early as the time of Andronicus, the recitation of ſome of thoſe pieces was already meaſured and noted for the conveniency of the muſicians; and the action regulated in like manner. I have inquired of ſeveral muſicians, whether it would be difficult to invent characters, by which one might note the declamation uſed on our ſtage; for we have not accents enough to write our notes in the manner practiſed by the ancients. Theſe gentlemen have anſwered me that the thing was poſſible, and that the declamation might be noted even with the Gamut of our muſic, provided we give the notes only one half of the ordinary intonation. For example, the notes which have a ſemi-tone of intonation in muſic, ſhould have but a quarter-tone in declamation. Wherefore we ſhould note the very leaſt depreſſions and elevations of the voice, that are ſenſible at leaſt to our ears.

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Our verſes do not carry their meaſure with them, like the metrical verſes of the Greeks and Romans. But I have been alſo informed, that we could not give the notes in declamation more than the half of their ordinary value. Thus we ſhould give a minim only the value of a crotchet, and a crotchet the value of a quaver; and the other notes ſhould be valued according to this proportion, in the ſame manner as would be practiſed in the intonation.

I am very ſenſible that it would not be eaſy to find people capable at firſt of reading currently this kind of muſic, and of intoning properly the notes. But if children at fifteen were taught this intonation for the ſpace of ſix months, they would learn it in that time; for their organs would become pliant to this intonation, or pronunciation of notes without ſinging, as they bend to the intonation of the notes of our common muſic. Exerciſe and habit are, with reſpect to the voice, what the bow and the muſician's hand are in relation to the violin. I do not even ſee how this intonation could be ſuppoſed to be difficult; for all that is to be done, is to accuſtom the voice to do methodically what it practiſes every day in converſation. Here we ſpeak ſometimes quick, and ſometimes ſlow: we uſe all ſorts of tones; and make the progreſſions, whether in raiſing or depreſſing the voice, by all kinds of poſſible intervals. The noted declamation would be nothing elſe but the tones and movements of the pronunciation written in notes. 'Tis certain that the difficulty

difficulty which would occur in the execution of ſuch a note, would not be near ſo great as that which we meet with ſometimes in reading words we never read before, and in ſinging at the ſame time and accompanying theſe words with the harpſichord in a note which we never ſtudied before. And yet even women learn by practice to perform theſe three operations at the ſame time.

With regard to the manner of writing the declamation in notes, whether that which we have here pointed out, or any other that may hereafter be invented; there can be no ſuch difficulty in digeſting it into certain rules, and reducing the method of it to practice, as to find out the art of noting the ſteps and figures of a balet danced by eight people, eſpecially conſidering the ſteps are ſo varied, and the figures ſo interwoven in our days. And yet Feuillée has contrived to find out this art; and his notes even inſtruct the dancers, in what attitude they are to hold their arms. 'Tis obſervable alſo, that tho' his Choregraphy was not publiſhed 'till the year 1706, yet the artiſts, as well in France, as in foreign countries, know already how to read it currently.

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CHAP. X.

Continuation of the proofs which shew that the ancients wrote their declamation in notes.

Changes that happened towards Augustus's time in the Roman declamation.

Comparison between these changes and that which happened in our music and dance under Lewis XIV.

LET us return now to the proofs drawn from facts, which shew that the ancients wrote the declamation of their theatrical pieces with notes. This sort of proof has quite another weight from that of an argumentation founded on mere possibilities.

As often as Cicero mentions the declamation of dramatic verses, he speaks of it in a quite different manner from our way of speaking of the declamation of Corneille's verses, which is an arbitrary thing. He mentions the declamation of dramatic verses as a regular melody, in conformity to which those verses were always pronounced: He speaks of it as of a beauty inherent, in a manner, in the verses he cites, like that which resulted from the sense they included, and from the choice of the words of which they were composed. After having produced

duced some verses of a tragedy, he says: [a] *Excellent verses! where the sentiments, the expression, the modulation, and every thing, in fine, breathes grief and concern.* 'Tis thus we should commend a recitative of one of Lulli's operas.

The same author, in several parts of his works, speaks of the theatrical pieces of Livius Andronicus, Ennius, and Nævius, three poets who lived about two hundred years before him, as of a composed declamation when they brought their pieces upon the stage, and which was still used at the time he wrote. Now if this declamation had not been written with notes, would it have been possible to have preserved it so long? I leave the reader to judge whether I have made any change in Cicero's meaning. *We have seen,* says he, [b] *instead of the plain and grave music of Nævius and Livius Andronicus's plays, a wild kind of music introduced upon the stage; insomuch that the actors, in order to follow the measure, are obliged to toss themselves to and fro, to roll their eyes and use contortions of their head, and in short, to throw themselves into agitations not unlike to those of frantic people.* 'Tis thus our author delivers himself on this subject, after observing that Plato is not altogether to blame, for affirming

[a] *Præclarum carmen, est enim rebus, verbis, & modis lugubre.* Cic. Quæst. Tusc. lib. 5.

[b] *Ego nec tam valde id timendum, nec plane contemnendum puto. Illa quidem musica, quæ solebat quondam complecti severitatem jucundam Livianis & Nævianis modis, nunc videtis ut eadem exultent, cervices oculosque pariter cum modorum flexionibus torqueant.* Cic. de Leg. lib. 2.

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that 'tis impoſſible to change the muſic of a country, without making ſome ſenſible alteration in the manners of the inhabitants. We have already obſerved that the geſture of the ancient comedians was as much ſubject to meaſure as the very recitation it ſelf.

They began therefore in Cicero's time to change the theatrical declamation. A hundred years after this great orator, Quintilian found this declamation ſo full already of effeminate and laſcivious tones, that after ſhewing the neceſſity of teaching children muſic, he adds, [a] *that he does not intend they ſhould learn the taſte of muſic which prevailed in his time upon the ſtage; whoſe modulations are mixt with ſo much impudence and wantonneſs, that we may juſtly charge them with having contributed to extinguiſh the poor remains of manly courage we had yet amongſt us.* All the ancients were perſuaded that the character of muſic which prevailed moſt in particular countries, had a great influence on the manners of the inhabitants. Shall we preſume to condemn ſo general an opinion relating to matters of fact, which happened daily in preſence of thoſe who committed them to writing; we that have only an imperfect knowledge of the muſic of the ancients? I ſhould appeal in that caſe to philoſophy, a ſcience to which our age ſeems ſo particularly addicted. We may even obſerve at preſent in places where the inhabitants are of

[a] *Non hanc a me præcipi, quæ nunc in ſcenis effœminata & impudicis modis fracta, non ex parte minima, ſi quid in nobis virilis roboris manebat, excidit.* QUINT. Inſt. lib. 1. cap. 10.

different

different religions, that they do not break up from divine ſervice in the ſame humor. This tranſient effect of their public worſhip becomes ſometimes a habit. In ſome countries the ſovereign has been obliged to excite the people, when turned proteſtants, by public acts, to the ſame diverſions on Sundays after the Divine ſervice, as they uſed to take without any encouragement or excitement before they had changed their religious worſhip. But let us quit a ſubject which would ſoon grow too ſerious, and return to our point.

Thoſe who are acquainted only with the French theatres, will not conceive ſo readily the whole meaning of the above cited paſſage of Quintilian. Tho' we have had ſome looſe and irregular pieces, yet the actors have always obſerved a great decorum, as well with reſpect to the tones, as the geſtures. But there are foreign theatres, where the players fall every day into the vice which Quintilian cenſures, by imitating all the tones and accents, (not to mention other particulars,) which paſſionate people are apt to fall into, when they find themſelves at full liberty.

By reading Horace's art of poetry we find that the defect with which Quintilian reproaches the theatrical declamation of his time, was owing to their having attempted to render it livelier, ſofter, and more expreſſive, as well with reſpect to the recitation as the geſture, than it had been in former times. As Horace wrote after Cicero and before Quintilian, it will be therefore not unworthy of our curioſity to examine what he ſays in

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relation to the changes which happened in the theatrical declamation, and to the difference there was between the new and old manner of reciting.

" In former times, says Horace, they did not " make use of flutes of as large a size as our " trumpets, and which they must have tied with " a brass wire; either in accompanying or sup- " porting the chorus. They used none but the " very simplest wind-instruments at the theatre, " instruments whose extent was very limited, be- " cause they were perforated only with a small " number of holes."

Tibia non, ut nunc, orichalco vincta, tubæque:
Æmula, sed tenuis simplexque, foramine pauco,
Aspirare, & adesse choris erat utilis.

HOR. de arte poet.

The pipe of old was not as large as now,
Nor gather'd all the breath a man could blow:
It's hollow, small, and fill'd with feeble wind,
It cheer'd the audience, with the chorus join'd,
Not made of brass, nor like the trumpet loud,
With pleasing airs it fill'd the little crowd.

CREECH.

" But, continues Horace, the thing is now very " much altered. In the first place, the move- " ment has been accelerated, and in order to re- " gulate it, they employ measures that were not " formerly used, which has stript the recitation " of its ancient gravity."

Accessit

Accessit numerisque modisque licentia major.
Id. ibid.

The modish luxury spread o'er the plays.
CREECH.

" They have likewise given, adds Horace, a " greater extent to the instruments than they " had before. The tones in which we de- " claim, having been also multiplied, there is a " greater variety of sounds in the recitation, " than was formerly permitted. The actors are " obliged to draw a great many sounds from their " lungs which were not before required, if they " intend to follow these new instruments, whose " strings condemn them with severity, when they " happen to fail. In fact, the faults of those " who executed the declamation must have been " more sensible, in proportion as the declamation " had a greater resemblance to singing."

I beg to be allowed, in clearing up this passage of Horace, to make use of a comparison drawn from the Church Music. St Ambrose would not admit into that Chant or kind of singing which to this day is called Ambrosian, more than four modes, denominated *Authentic*. This kind of song was certainly graver than the others, but had less beauty and expression. Out of fifteen strings, or fifteen principal notes contained in the system of harmonic music, there were four tones, namely, the highest and the three lowest, which were not received in the Ambrosian song. When St Ambrose composed it, the theatres were yet open, where they recited in the same language as people

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ſung in churches. This Saint, in all probability, was unwilling the faithful ſhould hear in church the uſual tones of the theatre. St Gregory, who ſettled what is called the Gregorean ſong, about fifty years after the theatres were ſhut, employed eight modes, adding thoſe called *Plagal*, to the four which were made uſe of by St Ambroſe. Thus the fifteen ſtrings of the ancient muſic were taken into the Gregorean ſong; and every body was ſo thoroughly convinced that this ſurpaſſed in beauty the Ambroſian, that ſo early as our Kings of the ſecond race, the churches of Gaul quitted the Ambroſian ſong for the Gregorean.

But to return to Horace, he ſays; "the actors "found themſelves under an obligation at the "ſame time of precipitating their geſture, and "hurrying their pronunciation, becauſe the move-"ment had been accelerated; for which reaſon "their precipitate declamation ſeemed to be quite "a new manner of reciting. In fine, the muſi-"cian who was obliged to give ſuch difficult "tones, found it neceſſary to paſs frequently from "one part of the ſtage to the other, that his tones "might be heard the better by the actors, by "drawing nearer to them. Thus our theatrical "declamation is become ſo lively and paſſionate, "that a player who ought to recite more ſedate-"ly, than a perſon who diſcourſes rationally up-"on futurity, pronounces the ſageſt maxims "with as much agitation, as the prieſteſs of Del-"phos could have ſhewn, when ſhe uttered her "oracles ſitting upon the tripod."

Sic priſcæ motumque & luxuriam addidit arti
Tibicen, traxitque vagus per pulpita veſtem:
Sic etiam fidibus voces crevêre ſeveris,
Et tulit eloquium inſolitum facundia præceps:
Utiliumque ſagax rerum & divina futuri
Sortilegis non diſcrepuit ſententia Delphis.

HOR. de arte poet.

Hence did our muſic, and our ſongs increaſe,
Our dance was artful, noble was our dreſs:
Our harps improv'd, and lofty eloquence,
In high ſtrong lines convey'd unuſual ſenſe:
And pithy ſentences ſhort truth fore-ſhew'd,
As clear and uſeful as the Delphian God.

CREECH.

The precipitate geſticulation of thoſe actors muſt have appeared like convulſive motions to ſuch as were accuſtomed to a ſmoother and ſlower recitation. Thus the action of an Italian player would ſeem like the declamation of a frantic perſon, to thoſe who had never ſeen a play acted but by Engliſh comedians. The new manner therefore of reciting muſt have appeared very extraordinary to the Romans in the beginning; but they accuſtomed themſelves to it gradually, becauſe people are eaſily reconciled to ſuch novelties as throw more ſoul and action into theatrical repreſentations.

There are very good reaſons to induce us to believe, that the firſt cauſe of the alteration which happened in the theatrical declamation in Cicero's time,

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time, was that the Romans, who for a century and upwards had carried on a great correſpondence with Greece, where they uſed to ſend even their children to ſtudy the arts and ſciences, had changed their manner of pronouncing. The theatre therefore could only be ſaid to have imitated the public, and copied its original.

Cicero himſelf informs us of the difference between the pronunciation of the Romans of his time and that of their anceſtors. It began to be overloaded with accents, aſpirations, and *ports de voix* borrowed from the pronunciation of foreigners. This is what he calls a new faſhion imported from abroad; *peregrinam inſolentiam. Let us judge*, ſays this author [a] by the mouth of Craſſus, *of the ancient pronunciation by the manner in which ſome women pronounce even in our times. As women are leſs converſant with the world than men, they are alſo leſs ſubject to make any alteration in the pronunciation they imbibed from their infancy. When I hear*, continues Craſſus, *my mother in-law Lælia, methinks I am liſtening to the recitation of Plautus and Nævius's pieces; for ſhe pronounces ſmooth and even, without any emphaſis, or affecting the accents or inflexions uſed in foreign languages. Have not I reaſon to believe that Lælia's father*

[a] *Equidem cum audio ſocrum meam* LÆLIAM, *facilius enim mulieres incorruptam antiquitatem conſervant, quod multorum ſermonis expertes tenent ſemper quæ prima didicerunt; ſed eam ſic audio ut Plautum mihi ac Nævium videar audire, ſono ipſo vocis ita recto & ſimplici, ut nihil oſtentationis aut imitationis afferre videatur, ex quo ſic locutum ejus patrem judico.* CIC. de orat. lib. 3.

pronounced

pronounced in the ſame manner as his daughter? We have already quoted this paſſage, to ſhew that the declamation of the ſtage was not what is properly called ſinging, ſince it was ſo very like the pronunciation uſed in ordinary converſation. Nations may alter their pronunciation, as they may change their language. During the reign of Henry IV. the tone and accent of the Gaſcoons was introduced into the court of France; but this faſhion was laid aſide after the death of that Prince, who loved the Gaſcoons, and preferred them to the reſt of his ſubjects, becauſe he was born and bred in their province.

'Tis almoſt impoſſible but the geſture of people, whoſe language has acquired a more lively and more accented pronunciation, will be alſo more frequent and lively: this being a neceſſary conſequence of the organization of the body. *Our geſture*, ſays Quintilian, [a] *is hurried by the very quickneſs of our diſcourſe.* In fact this author, after commending the precepts which Cicero gives in relation to the geſture of an orator, adds, [b] *we are accuſtomed at preſent to ſee a more animated geſture; and we ſeem even to require this violent action of our orators.*

Pliny the younger, who had been one of Quintilian's diſciples, writes [c] to a friend of his,

[a] *Geſtus cum ipſa orationis celeritate crebreſcit.* QUINT. Inſt. l. 12. c. 3.

[b] *Sed jam recepta eſt actio paullò agitatior, etiam et exigitur.* Id. ibid.

[c] *Pudet referre quæ & quam fracta pronunciatione dicantur.* PLIN. ep. 14, l. 12.

that

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that he is ashamed to tell him what he had heard some orators recite, or to entertain him with the effeminate squeakings with which their declamation was filled. A declamation which we endeavour to render too expressive, must fall into one of these two opposite vices: either it will be too violent and full of excessive *ports de voix*; or it will be weak and effeminate. Wherefore Pliny charges this declamation with degenerating [a] *into a downright bawling*. This author relates also, that Domitius Afer, a celebrated orator in the Roman history, and who began to plead about thirty years after the death of Cicero, called the new manner of declaiming, the downfall of eloquence. After having heard some young people plead, he said, *artificium hoc periit*; but perhaps his criticism carried with it too severe a censure. 'Tis certain however that this orator declaimed in an opposite taste to that which he has here censured, and *that his pronunciation was slow and grave*, as the same Pliny observes [b] when speaking of Afer. 'Tis not my intention in producing all these passages, to prove that the Romans were to blame for changing their manner of declaiming, but to shew that they actually changed it, and that this alteration commenced about the time of Cicero.

'Tis true however, that things were carried, in all probability, to excess in the beginning, as

[a] *Immodicum insolitumque clamorem.* Id. ib.

[b] *Cum apud centum viros diceret graviter & lentè, hoc enim illi actionis genus erat.* Id. ibid.

moderation

moderation is a very scarce virtue, and especially as the composers of declamation, as well as the players on the instruments, and the actors, must have vied with one another to excel with respect to the expression. This is what always happens in such novelties as are relished by the public: Some artists fall short of the limits prescribed by reason; while others leap beyond them, and give into all manner of extravagance and excess.

Our French music has within these fourscore years met with a fate not unlike to that of the Roman declamation in the time of Cicero. About a hundred and twenty years ago the songs composed in France were, generally speaking, nothing more than a series of long notes, and what our musicians sometimes *du gros Fa*. The movement of the execution was very slow; and neither the singers, nor the players on instruments were capable of executing a more difficult music. They did not even so much as think of composing others; perhaps there had been much better in former times, but that taste was vanished. Those who are best acquainted with music, and the history of ours in particular, whom I have constantly consulted before I committed any thing on this subject to paper, have assured me, that the state of our music was 120 years ago exactly as I have described it. Necessity had not even taught them as yet to measure it in writing: but the taste has since been altered, and the progression of our songs is accelerated to that

degree,

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degree, that ſometimes they have neither grace nor expreſſion.

This change has produced a ſtill greater alteration in our dance, and eſpecially in that of the ſtage. 'Tis now fourſcore years ſince the movement of all the balet airs was quite ſlow, and their modulation, if I be permitted to make uſe of this expreſſion, advanced ſedately, even in its greateſt gaiety.

Theſe airs were executed with lutes, theorbos, and viols mixt with ſome violins; and the ſteps and figures of the balets compoſed to the airs here mentioned, were ſlow and ſimple. The dancers might obſerve all poſſible decency in the execution of theſe balets, the movements of which ſcarce differed from thoſe of common dances.

Moliere had ſcarce ſhewn by two or three airs that it was poſſible to improve in this reſpect, when Lulli appeared, and began to compoſe what we call quick airs, adapted to the balets. As the dancers who executed theſe balets were obliged to move with greater celerity and action than had been hitherto practiſed, a great many people ſaid that the right taſte of dancing was corrupted, and that it was degenerating into a low vulgar entertainment. Even the very dancers found it difficult to enter into the ſpirit of thoſe new airs, and Lulli himſelf was frequently obliged to compoſe the dances he had a mind to ſee executed purſuant to the airs here mentioned. Thus he was obliged to compoſe the ſteps and figures of the Chacone in Cadmus, becauſe Beauchamps, who executed his balets at that time, did not reliſh the character of this air.

The ſucceſs of theſe quick airs induced Lulli to compoſe ſuch as ſhould be both quick and characteriſed at the ſame time. We give the appellation of characteriſed to thoſe airs whoſe harmony and rhythmus imitated the taſte of a particular muſic, ſuppoſed to have been adopted by a certain people, or even by ſome fabulous perſonages of antiquity. The imagination therefore forms this idea of muſic, according to what is known of the character of thoſe perſonages, to whom the muſician gives airs of his own invention. 'Tis by the relation theſe airs have to this idea, (which tho' it be a vague one, is nevertheleſs the ſame pretty near in all people) that we judge of their fitneſs and agreement. As we have already obſerved, there is a probability or ſeeming truth even in this imaginary muſic. Tho' we never heard Pluto's muſic, yet we find a kind of probability in thoſe airs, to which Lulli makes the retinue of the infernal Monarch dance in the fourth act of the opera of Alceſtes, becauſe theſe airs breathe a tranquil and ſerious contentment, and as Lulli himſelf expreſſed it, *a veiled joy*. In effect, the characteriſed airs, with regard to the phantoms which our imagination has formed, are ſuſceptible of all ſorts of expreſſions in the ſame manner as other airs; being expreſſive indeed of the ſame thing, but in a particular taſte and agreeably to the probability we have imagined.

As the balet-compoſers whom Lulli employed, did not improve as quick as he, it frequently

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happened that he found himſelf under a neceſſity of compoſing the balet for airs of a particular character. Six months before he died, he compoſed one for the air, to which he intended to make the Cyclops dance, who belonged to the retinue of Polyphemus [a]. But the dancers improved afterwards to ſuch a degree that they have even outdone the muſicians, to whom they have ſometimes ſuggeſted the idea of airs of a new character, ſuitable to the balets of which theſe dancers had firſt conceived the idea. This emulation has been the occaſion of introducing a variety and elegance into the balets and airs, which they never had before. About threeſcore years ago, the Fauns, Shepherds, Peaſants, Cyclops, and Tritons danced pretty near in the ſame manner; but now the dance is divided into ſeveral characters. The artiſts, if I am not miſtaken, reckon ſixteen, and each of theſe characters has its proper ſteps, attitudes, and figures upon the ſtage. Even the very women have entered by degrees into theſe characters, and render them perceptible at preſent in their dance as well as men.

I do not deny but that our muſic and dance have been ſometimes ſpoilt by endeavoring to inrich and render them more expreſſive. But this is the inevitable fate of all thoſe arts which make a conſiderable progreſs. There are always a number of artiſts to be found who exceed their point, and disfigure their work by

[a] *In the opera of* GALATEA.

ſtriving

ſtriving to imbelliſh it. Thoſe who prefer the ancient dance alledge generally the exceſſes into which the preſent artiſts fall; when they want to prove the depravity of the new taſte. But as the public is capable of diſcerning between the defects of the art and the faults of the artiſt, it does not condemn the new inventions, becauſe of their being abuſed. Wherefore we are ſo well accuſtomed to the new theatrical dance, that we ſhould find the taſte extremely inſipid, which prevailed about ſixty years ago. Thoſe who have ſeen our theatrical dance arrive gradually to its preſent perfection, are not ſo much ſurprized; but foreigners who have been abſent a long while from France, are vaſtly ſtruck with this progreſs, which to them appears ſubitaneous. Having done now with this digreſſion, which gives, methinks, a very clear explication of an important paſſage of Horace, that has been hitherto miſunderſtood, let us return to the theatrical declamation of the ancients. What I am going to ſay concerning the manner it was executed, is ſufficient alone to prove all that I have hitherto advanced.

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CHAP. XI.

The Romans frequently divided the theatrical declamation between two actors, one of whom pronounced, while the other executed the geſticulation.

THE declamation of dramatic pieces was frequently divided between two actors; one of whom was obliged to pronounce, while the other performed the geſticulation. Now how would it have been poſſible for theſe two actors to perform in concert with one another, and to agree both of them with the accompanyment, unleſs the declamation had been concerted in ſuch a manner that each of them knew preciſely what his companion was to perform, and in what ſpace of time he ſhould execute it? Is this a thing that could have been ſetled without writing? Let us ſee what arguments can be offered in favor of our opinion. After Livy had given the hiſtory of the firſt theatrical repreſentations at Rome, where he relates the manner of their progreſs, purſuant to what we have obſerved in the preceding chapter, he proceeds with the hiſtory of the Roman ſtage, and acquaints us with the adventure, which was the firſt occaſion of dividing the declamation, as it were, into two employments; and he even gives us the reaſons for which that cuſtom was eſtabliſhed.

Livius

" Livius Andronicus, [a] a celebrated poet who " flouriſhed about the year 514 of Rome, and " near fourſcore years after the theatres had been " opened in that city, uſed to act in ſome " of his pieces. It was then a cuſtomary thing " for dramatic poets to appear themſelves on " the ſtage in order to recite ſome part of their " works. The people who aſſumed the liberty, " *which they ſtill preſerve in France and Italy*, of " deſiring thoſe paſſages to be repeated which " pleaſed them moſt, by crying out ſo often the " latin word *Bis*, (which anſwers to our *encore*) " made poor Andronicus recite ſo long, that at laſt " he grew quite hoarſe. Finding himſelf therefore " incapable of declaiming any longer, he made " the people conſent to his having a ſlave to " recite the verſes, whom he placed before the " muſician; while he made the ſame geſticula- " tion as if he himſelf had been reciting. It " was then obſerved that his action grew more " lively and animated, becauſe he exerted his " whole ſtrength in geſticulating, while another " had the care and trouble of pronouncing. Hence " the practice aroſe, continues Livy, of dividing " the declamation between two actors, and to " recite, as it were, to the geſture and action

[a] LIVIUS, ... *idem ſcilicet, quod omnes tunc erant, ſuorum carminum actor, dicitur, cum ſæpius revocatus vocem obtudiſſet, veniâ petitâ puerum ad canendum ante tibicinem cum ſtatuiſſet, canticum egiſſe aliquanto magis vigenti motu, quia nihil vocis uſus impedichat. Inde ad manum cantari hiſtrionibus cæptum, diverbiaque tantum ipſorum voci relicta.* TIT. LIV. hiſt. lib. 7.

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" of the comedian; and this cuſtom has ſo far " prevailed, that the comedians pronounce no- " thing at preſent but the verſes of the dialogues."

It would be unneceſſary, methinks, to ſhew here of what weight Livy's authority is in the preſent diſpute; and that all the argumentations imaginable are incapable of counterbalancing his depoſition: This is a truth, I fancy, which no body will ſo much as queſtion.

This paſſage of Livy ſtands in need of no other commentary, but of an authentic explication of the latin words *Canticum* and *Diverbium*; which we find in Diomedes. This ancient grammarian, after obſerving that the theatrical pieces were compoſed of the chorus, dialogue, and monologue, adds: [a] *The Dialogues are thoſe parts of a play in which ſeveral perſons converſe together. The Cantica or Monologues are parts where an actor ſpeaks by himſelf, or in which, ſuppoſing there is a ſecond actor upon the ſtage, this ſecond actor does not converſe with the firſt; inſomuch that if he ſays any thing, he ſays it, as it were, aſide; that is, without addreſſing his diſcourſe to the other.* 'Tis obſervable that thoſe paſſages of a dramatic piece which the ancients called *Cantica*, are generally the moſt

[a] *Membra Comœdiarum tria ſunt, Diverbium, Canticum, & Chorus. Diverbia ſunt partes comœdiarum in quibus diverſorum perſonæ verſantur. In Canticis autem una tantum debet eſſe perſona, aut ſi duæ fuerint, ita debent eſſe ut ex occulto una audiat & eloquatur, ſed ſi cum, ſi opus fuerit, verba faciat.* DIOM. de arte Gram. l. 3. c. 4.

moving

moving, becauſe the actor who thinks himſelf at full liberty, gives a ſwing to his moſt impetuous and ſecret ſentiments, which he checks or diſguiſes in the other ſcenes.

We may form ſome idea of the ſinging or harmonious declamation of thoſe *Cantica* by what Quintilian ſays of them, tho' he mentions them only occaſionally. This orator, ſpeaking of a paſſage of Cicero's oration in defence of Milo, which ought to be pronounced with an emphaſis, ſays, [a] that it has ſomething in it of the nature of a *Canticum. We ſee*, continues Quintilian, *'tis impoſſible to recite it without throwing our heads ſomewhat back, as we are generally inclined to do by a mechanical inſtinct, when we want to pronounce a thing with emphaſis: the voice flows with greater eaſe, when we hold our heads in that poſture.* The ſame author ſays [b] in another place (which we have already cited, when we endeavored to prove that the declamation of the ancients was not a muſical modulation,) " that a child muſt read the poets in " a different manner from what he would read " proſe; but ſtill he muſt take care his voice " does not ſlip from him, as if he were recit- " ing a *Canticum* upon the ſtage."

[a] *Pleniore tamen hæc canali fluunt:* Vos Albani tumuli atque luci, &c. *nam Cantici quiddam habent, ſenſuſque reſupina ſunt.* QUINT. Inſt. lib. 11. cap. 3.

[b] *Sit autem lectio virilis & cum ſuavitate quadam gravis, non quidem proſæ ſimilis, quia carmen eſt & poetæ canere ſe teſtantur; non tamen in canticum diſſoluta.* QUINT. ib. l. 1. c. 10.

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As Livy relates the origin of a cuſtom which was practiſed in his days, I ſhould not have thought of confirming his recital by the teſtimony of other authors, if the thing itſelf did not appear very extraordinary. For which reaſon, it will not be amiſs, methinks, to produce ſome more paſſages of ancient authors, who affirm the ſame thing as this hiſtorian.

Valerius Maximus, who wrote under Tiberius, relates the adventure of Andronicus in the ſame terms almoſt as Livy. He ſays [a], when ſpeaking of this poet; *Andronicus acting one of his tragedies, was obliged by the ſpectators to repeat a particular paſſage ſo often, that his voice grew hoarſe; upon which he was under a neceſſity of making uſe of a ſlave to recite his verſes in concert with the flute, while he himſelf executed the geſticulation.*

Lucian in a treatiſe on the dancing of the ancients, ſays [b] of the tragic perſonages, that they pronounce now and then ſome Iambic verſes, and in ſo doing their only attention is to unfold properly the organs of the voice, for the artiſts or poets who brought the pieces upon the ſtage, took care of the reſt. A few lines after he adds: *In former times the ſame perſons recited and geſticulated, but as the action obſtructed the liberty of breathing, and troubled the pronunciation,*

[a] *Is ſui operis actor, cum ſæpius à populo revocatus vocem obtudiſſet, adhibito pueri & tibicinis concentu geſticulationem tacitus peregit.* VALER. MAX. lib. 2. cap. 4.

[b] LUCIAN. de orcheſi.

the

the public have allowed thoſe who geſticulate to employ fingers who pronounce in their ſtead. Aulus Gellius, a cotemporary of Lucian, ſays, [a] *that the fingers who recited in his time without moving, performed alſo the geſticulation when they recited at the ancient theatres.*

All theſe recitals are further corroborated by the teſtimony of Donatus, who wrote profeſſedly on the ſtage. *The Comedians themſelves*, ſays he [b], in relation to Terence's plays, *pronounced the dialogues; but the modulation of the Cantica was regulated, not by the poet, but by a ſkilful muſician.*

In fine, Iſidorus of Seville, who might at leaſt have ſeen thoſe who had been preſent at the theatrical repreſentations of the Romans, mentions this diviſion of the declamation between two actors. He ſays in relation to one of the parts of the theatre, [c] *that the poets and thoſe who ſung tragedies or comedies, placed themſelves there in order to recite, while the other actors executed the geſtures.* We find by the hiſtory of Livius Andronicus, as related by Livy, and by ſeveral other paſſages of ancient authors, that the poets frequently ſung part of their plays, that is, they themſelves recited thoſe paſſages which the

[a] *Saltabundi autem canebant, quæ nunc ſtantes canunt.* AULUS GELLIUS, lib. 26. cap. 2.

[b] *Diverbia hiſtriones pronunciabant; Cantica vero temperabantur modis, non à poeta, ſed à perito artis muſices factis.* DONAT. fragm. de trag. & comœd.

[c] *Ibi enim poetæ, comœdi & tragœdi, ad certamen conſcendebant, liſque canentibus, alii geſtus edebant.* ISID. Orig. lib. 18. cap. 44.

geſticulators

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geſticulators did not pronounce. Four verſes of an epigram from the latin Anthology, give us a very good deſcription of an actor, whoſe geſticulation agrees with what the other actors recite, after the chorus has done ſpeaking.

Ingreſſus ſcenam populum ſaltator adorat,
Solerti ſpondens prodere verba manu.
Nam cum grata chorus diffudit cantica, dulcis
Quæ reſonat cantor, motibus ipſe probat.

We ſhall give hereafter the reaſons why we have tranſlated *Saltator* by the word *actor*.

'Tis proper to remind the reader of three things. The firſt, that the ancient theatres were a great deal bigger than ours, and not ſo well illuminated. As the plays of the ancients were acted by day, their ſcenes, purſuant to what I ſhall preſently obſerve, could not have ſo diſtinct a light as that which our theatrical illuminations throw upon the ſtage. Wherefore the ancients did not ſee their actors ſo near and ſo diſtinctly as we do ours. The ſecond is, that the ancient actors were maſked, and conſequently people could not ſee by the motions of their mouth, or the muſcles of their face, whether they ſpoke or not. The ſpectator was not therefore ſenſible of the ridiculous abſurdity we imagine to ourſelves at firſt in the behaviour of two perſons, one of whom was to geſticulate without ſpeaking, while the other with his arms a-croſs recited in a pathetic tone. Thirdly, as the maſks of the comedians

comedians were of uſe in augmenting the ſtrength of the voice; (which we ſhall prove hereafter) they muſt have produced ſuch an alteration, as to render it difficult to know, for example, whether the voice which Mitio in the Adelphi had in the *Canticum*, was the ſame as he had in the Dialogues. 'Tis highly probable, they uſed to chuſe a *ſinger*, whoſe voice was as like, as poſſible, to that of the comedian; and we may reaſonably ſuppoſe that it was no longer poſſible to diſtinguiſh the two voices, when they had paſſed thro' the maſks. This ſinger placed himſelf in a kind of alcove, [a] towards the bottom of the ſtage.

CHAP. XII.

Of the maſks of the ancient comedians.

HERE I think myſelf in ſome manner obliged to make a kind of digreſſion concerning the maſks in uſe among the Greek and Roman comedians; as it will contribute to illuſtrate what I have ſtill to ſay with reſpect to the diviſion of the declamation between the *Geſticulator* and the *Singer*. This practice was firſt introduced into Greece by Æſchilus: but Diomedes tells us, [b] that it was one Roſcius Gal-

[a] ISIDOR. orig. lib. 18.

[b] *Perſonis verò uti primus cœpit Roſcius Gallus præcipuus Hiſtrio, quòd oculis obverſis erat, nec ſatis decorus in perſonis, niſi paraſites pronuntiabat.* DIOMED. lib. 3.

lus,

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lus, who first wore a mask on the Roman stage, to conceal the defect of his squinting; tho' he does not let us know when this Roscius lived. This custom has been preserved in part on some modern stages; for a great many personages of the Italian comedy are masked. Tho' we have never obliged our actors to imitate this practice of the ancients, yet it is not a long while since masks were frequently used on the French stage in the representation of comedies. They have been also used even in tragic representations; and tho' they have been since banished from thence, yet they are not intirely expelled our comedies. The ancient players were all masked when they acted, and each kind of dramatic poetry had its particular mask. In a treatise written by Lucian, and intitled the *Gymnasium*, which is by way of dialogue between Solon and Anacharsis the Scythian, the latter says to Solon, who had been speaking to him of the utility of tragedies and comedies, *I have seen some of them at the Bacchanalian entertainments. In tragedy, the actors are mounted on a kind of stilts, and wear masks, the mouths of which gape enormously wide. The words that are uttered from them with a great noise, are grave and sententious. In comedy, the actors, who are shod and dressed as people in common life, do not bawl out so loud, but their masks are much more ridiculous than those of the former.*

True it is, that by means of those masks, the actor appeared as conformable as he pleased to the

the character he assumed. The ancient players, [a] as well in tragedy as comedy, had several sorts of masks which they frequently changed. For the people belonging to the stage were of opinion in those times that a particular physiognomy was so very essential to the character of a personage, as to think it necessary to give the figure of the mask proper for the representation, in order to communicate a complete knowledge of the character of this personage. After the description therefore of each personage, such as they used to prefix to their theatrical pieces under the title of *Dramatis personæ*, it was customary for them to give the figure of the mask; which appeared to them a necessary instruction.

In effect, those masks represented not only the face, but likewise the head intire, whether narrow or broad, bald or covered with hair, round or pointed; tho' the late Monsieur Perrault was of a contrary opinion. This writer was a person of such honor and probity, and withal so much a gentleman, that I am persuaded he would not be angry with me, for the remark I am going to make. The veneration I preserve for his memory, induces me even to fancy, he would have corrected his mistake, had he been apprized of it.

[a] *Major in personis observatio est apud comicos tragicosque, multis enim utuntur & variis.* QUINT. in Procem. lib. 11.

Every

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Every one knows the fable of Phædrus, [a] in which a fox, after having examined a tragic maſk, cries out; *What a fine countenance without any brains!*

Quanta ſpecies, inquit, cerebrum non habet!

Upon which M. Perrault writes the following criticiſm. [b] *We find in Æſop it was an ape, who meeting with a head in a ſculptor's ſhop, ſays, Behold what a fine head! 'tis a pity it has no brains. The thing goes very well in the manner Æſop has related it, becauſe a head is made to have brains; but there is no wit at all in applying it to a maſk or vizard which are not made to have brains, and cannot conſequently be reproached for having none. Now I would fain know whether there can be any taſte in altering a fable after this manner?* But the maſks of which Phædrus makes mention, were exactly in the ſame caſe as Æſop's head; for they covered the intire head of the actor, and therefore ſeemed made for brains. This may be ſeen only by opening the ancient manuſcript of Terence in the King's Library, or even the Terence publiſhed by Madam Dacier.

The uſe therefore of maſks prevented people from ſeeing an actor advanced in years, play the part of a young lover. Hippolytus, Hercules, and Neſtor appeared always upon the ſtage, with their heads diſtinguiſhable by being ſuited to their known character. The vizard under which the actor appeared was aways agreable

[a] Phædr. fab. 7. lib. 7. [b] Parallels. tom. 3. p. 307.

able to his character, and there was no ſuch thing to be ſeen, as a player acting the part of a man of honor with the phyſiognomy of an accompliſhed villain. *When the compoſers of declamation,* ſays Quintilian, [a] *introduce a piece upon the ſtage, they know how to draw the pathetic even from the very maſks. In tragedies, Niobe appears with a ſorrowful countenance; and Medea announces her character by the fierce air of her phyſiognomy. Strength and valor are painted on Hercules's maſk; while that of Ajax proclaims his tranſport and fury. In comedies, the maſks of ſlaves, pimps, paraſites, peaſants, ſoldiers, old women, courtezans, and ſhe-ſlaves, have each their particular character. By the maſks, we diſtinguiſh the croſs old fellow from the good-natur'd old gentleman; the ſober youth from the debauched rake; and the young damſel from the lady of quality. If the father who acts the principal character of the comedy, is to be ſometimes pleaſed and ſometimes vexed, he muſt have one of the brows of his maſk knit*

[a] *Itaque in iis quæ ad ſcenam componuntur fabulis, artifices pronuntiandi à perſonis quoque affectus mutuantur, ut ſit Niobe in tragœdia triſtis, atrox Medæa, attonitus Ajax, truculentus Hercules. In comœdiis verò præter aliam obſervationem quâ ſervi, lenones, paraſiti, ruſtici, milites, vetulæ, meretriculæ, ancillæ, ſenes auſteri ac mites, juvenes ſeveri ac luxurioſi, matronæ, puellæ inter ſe diſcernuntur; pater ille, cujus præcipuè partes ſunt, quia interim concitatus, interim lenis eſt, altero erecto, altero compoſito eſt ſupercilio. Atque id oſtendere maximè Latinis actoribus moris eſt, quod cum iis quas agunt partibus congruat.* QUINT. Inſt. l. 11. c. 3.

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and the other ſmooth; and he has a particular attention to ſhew that ſide of his maſk to his ſpectators, which agrees with his preſent character. 'Tis thus M. Boindin * explains the laſt lines of the paſſage of Quintilian, by ſuppoſing that the comedian who wore the maſk turned himſelf ſometimes one way and ſometimes another, to ſhew always that ſide of his face which ſuited his preſent ſituation, when he acted parts where he was obliged to ſhew a change of paſſion, without being allowed to go behind the ſcenes to change his maſk. For example, if this father was pleaſed upon the ſtage, he preſented immediately that ſide of his maſk which had a ſmooth brow; and when his temper was altered, he walked on the ſtage, and managed ſo as to ſhew that ſide of the maſk which had the knit brow, taking care in both ſituations to appear always in profile. *The Roman comedians*, continues Quintilian, *had a particular attention to this part of their art.* We meet with ſomething in Julius Pollux, which ſeems to confirm this ingenious and judicious conjecture. This author * ſpeaking of the characteriſed maſks, ſays, that an old man's maſk who acts the principal part in a comedy, ought to be ſour and ruffled on one ſide, and pleaſant and ſerene on the other. The ſame author ſays alſo in regard to the maſks of tragedies which ought to be characteriſed, that the maſk of Thamyris, that raſh muſician whom the muſes deprived of his

* In an eſſay preſented to the academy of Belles Lettres.

ſight

ſight for having been ſo inſolent as to challenge them, ought to have one eye blue and the other black.

The maſks of the ancients produced likewiſe a great probability in thoſe excellent plays, where the intricacy ariſes from the miſtake by which ſome of the actors take one perſonage for another. The ſpectator who found himſelf miſtaken upon attempting to diſtinguiſh between two actors, whoſe maſk was as like as poſſible, might eaſily conceive that the actors themſelves were deceived. Thus he was ſoon impoſed upon by the ſuppoſition on which the incidents of the piece are founded; whereas this ſuppoſition is ſo very improbable with us, that 'tis with great difficulty we give way to it. In the repreſentation of two pieces which Moliere and Renard have imitated from Plautus, we perceive diſtinctly that the perſonages who occaſion the miſtake are really different. How is it poſſible then to conceive, that the other actors who are nearer to them than we, ſhould be miſtaken in this reſpect? 'Tis owing therefore to the habit we have of humoring all the ſuppoſitions which cuſtom has eſtabliſhed on the ſtage, that we fall in with thoſe which conſtitute the intricacy of the Amphytrio and the Menæchmi; and I ſhould be far from adviſing any body to compoſe a new French comedy, the intrigue of which ſhould conſiſt in the like perplexity.

Beſides the maſks furniſhed the ancients with the opportunity of making men act thoſe fe-

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male perſonages, whoſe declamation required robuſter lungs than women generally have, eſpecially when they were to make themſelves heard in ſuch ſpacious places as the Roman theatres. In fact, ſeveral paſſages of the ancients [a], and among the reſt a recital which Aulus Gellius gives of the adventure that happened to a comedian whoſe name was Polus, who acted the perſonage of Electra, inform us, that it was cuſtomary for the ancients to make men act female characters. This author therefore relates, that Polus acting at the theatre of Athens the part of Electra in the tragedy of Sophocles, mounted the ſtage with an urn in his hand, in which the real aſhes of one of his children were depoſited. This was in that part of the play where Electra appears holding an urn in her hand, in which ſhe imagines the aſhes of her brother Oreſtes are contained. As Polus was exceedingly moved when he addreſſed his ſpeech to this urn, ſo of courſe he made a great impreſſion upon the whole aſſembly. Juvenal railing againſt Nero, ſays, that they muſt lay maſks, *Thyrſus*'s, and in fine Antigona's gown, at the feet of this Emperor's ſtatues, as a kind of trophy to preſerve the memory of his great actions. This ſuppoſes evidently that Nero had acted the part of the ſiſter of Eteocles and Polynices in ſome tragedy.

Ante pedes Domiti longum tu pone Thyeſte
Syrma, vel Antigonæ, & perſonam Menalippes.
JUV. ſat. 8.

[a] CICERO de offic. lib. 1. AULUS GELLIUS. lib. 7. cap. 5.

By thee Domitii's ſtatues ſhall be laid,
The habit and the maſk in which you play'd
Antigone's, or bold Thyeſte's part,
(While your wild nature little wanted art.)
STEPNEY.

By means of thoſe maſks they introduced all ſorts of foreign nations on the ſtage, with their own peculiar phyſiognomy. *The maſk of a red-hair'd Batavian*, ſays Martial, *which raiſes your laughter, is a bugbear to children.*

——— *Ruſi perſona Batavi*
Quem tu derides; hæc timet ora puer.

Thoſe maſks furniſhed even lovers with opportunities of paying a compliment to their miſtreſſes. Suetonius informs us, [a] that when Nero mounted the ſtage in order to repreſent a God or a Hero, he wore a maſk made after his own viſage; but when he acted the part of ſome Goddeſs or Heroin, he then wore a maſk which reſembled the woman he actually loved.

Julius Pollux, [b] who compoſed his work for the emperor Commodus, aſſures us that in the ancient Greek comedy, which had aſſumed the liberty of characteriſing and acting living citi-

[a] *Heroum Deorumque, item Heroidum perſonis effictis ad ſimilitudinem oris ſui & faminæ, prout quamque diligeret,* SUET. in NER.

[b] ONOMAST. lib. 4. c. 18.

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zens, the actors wore a mask which resembled the person they represented in the play. Thus Socrates might have seen on the Athenian stage an actor who wore a mask that was like him, when Aristophanes represented him under the name of Socrates, in the comedy of the *Clouds*. This same Pollux gives us, in the above-cited chapter, a very long and curious detail concerning the different characters of masks which were used in comic and tragic representations.

But on the other hand the masks deprived the spectators of the pleasure of seeing the passions rise, and of discerning their different symptoms on the countenance of the actor. All the expressions of the human passions affect us; but those marks which are painted on the visage, make a far greater impression, as Quintilian [b] observes, than such as shew themselves only by the gesture and voice.

And yet the ancient comedians could not display the signs of the passions on the countenance, for they very seldom laid aside the mask, and even some comedians never put it off at all. 'Tis true indeed, we suffer our comedians to conceal one half of such marks of the passions as may be expressed on the countenance. These marks consist as much in the changes that happen in the color of the face, as in those which are made in the features. Now the red paint with

[b] *Dominatur autem maximè vultus.* QUINT. lib. 11. cap. 3.

which it has been customary within these twenty years even for men to dawb themselves before they appear on the stage, hinders us from perceiving the changes of color, which make so great and natural an impression. But the masks of the ancient comedians concealed also the alteration of the features which the paint does not.

This indeed may be said in defence of the mask, that it does not conceal the eyes of the comedian from the spectator. Now if it be true that the passions are more discernible by the alterations which happen in our countenance, than by those which appear in our gesture, attitude, and tone of voice; 'tis likewise true that these passions are still more distinguishable by the changes that happen in our eyes, than by what appears in the others parts of the face. Our eyes [a] alone are capable of representing distinctly what passes in the countenance, and render it, if I may say so, intirely visible notwithstanding the mask. The imagination supplies what lies concealed; and when we behold the eye fired with rage, we imagine we see the rest of the countenance inflamed. Several passages of Cicero and Quintilian shew, that the ancient actors expressed perfectly all the signs of the passions by the motion of their eyes, assisted by the attitude and gestures. The same may be said of those

[a] *Animi est omnis actio, & imago animi vultus est, indices oculi.* CIC. de orat. lib. 3.

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Italian comedians who uſe maſks upon the ſtage. *The ſoul*, as Quintilian obſerves, [a] *is painted on the countenance; and the eyes are of all parts of the face, that which ſpeaks to us, as it were, moſt intelligibly.*

I ſhall adhere nevertheleſs to the ſimpleſt opinion; for I really think it impoſſible for a maſked actor to expreſs ſo well as one who uſes no maſk, the greateſt part of the paſſions, and eſpecially thoſe of the tender kind. The comedian who acts without a maſk may employ all the methods of expreſſing the paſſions which the maſked player uſes, and he is capable alſo of ſhewing ſigns of the paſſions, which are not in the other's power. I fancy therefore that the ancients who had ſo great a reliſh for the repreſentation of theatrical pieces, would have made their comedians lay aſide their maſks, were it not for one reaſon. This is, that as their theatres were very large and without a roof or ſolid covering, the maſk was of great uſe to the comedian, inaſmuch as it enabled him to make himſelf heard by all the ſpectators, whilſt on the other hand it deprived the latter of no great advantage. In fact, it was impoſſible that the alterations of the countenance which the maſk conceals, ſhould be diſtinctly perceived by the ſpectators, a great number of whom were upwards of twelve fathoms diſtant from the comedian: Let us explain the reaſon, which I have here alledged.

[a] *In ipſo vultu plurimùm valent oculi per quos maximè animus emanat.* QUINT. Inſt. lib. 11. cap. 3.

Gellius,

Gellius, who wrote under the emperor Adrian, commends [a] the etymology which Caius Baſſus gave of the Latin word *perſona*, which ſignifies a maſk, by making this term come from the verb *perſonare*, which implies to reſound. "In fact, "ſays he, the face and the whole head being "incloſed under the cover of the maſk, inſo-"much that the voice cannot make its way but "by one narrow paſſage, it follows therefore "that this conſtraint of the voice produces a "ſtronger and clearer ſound. Hence the La-"tins have given the name of *perſona* to maſks, "which render the voice of thoſe who wear "them more diſtinct and ſonorous." Whether Baſſus was right or not in his etymology, is nothing at all to our purpoſe. 'Tis ſufficient for us, that Gellius would neither have commended nor adopted it, had not maſks in his days been a kind of echoes. Boetius confirms his opinion by ſaying, that the concavity of the maſk augments the force of the voice.

No body can pretend to queſtion, after having read theſe paſſages of Gellius, and Boetius, who

[a] *Lepidè mehercules & ſciti Caius Baſſus in libris quos de origine vocabulorum compoſuit, unde appellata ſit perſona, interpretatur, à perſonando enim id vocabulum factum eſſe conjectat: nam caput, inquit, & os cooperimento perſonæ tectum undique, unaque tantum vocis emittendæ via pervium, quæ non vaga neque diffuſa eſt, in unum tantummodo exitum collectam coactamque vocem, & magis claros ſonoroſque ſonitus facit. Quoniam igitur indumentum illud oris clareſcere & reſonare vocem facit, ob eam cauſam perſona dicta eſt.* AUL. GELL. Noct. Att. lib. 5. cap. 7.

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wrote what they were eye-witneſſes of every day, that the ancients made uſe of maſks to increaſe the ſound of the voice: I fancy they faſtened to the mouth an incruſtation which formed a kind of horn.

We find by the figures of maſks in ancient manuſcripts, as alſo by thoſe on ingraved ſtones and medals, and in the ruins of the theatre of Marcellus and ſeveral other monuments, that the opening at the mouth was very wide; being a kind of gaping mouth which frightened children.

——*Tandemque redit ad pulpita notum*
Exodium, cum perſonæ pallentis hiatum
In gremio matris formidat ruſticus infans.
Juv. ſat. 3.

The ſame rude ſong returns upon the crowd,
And by tradition, is for wit allow'd.
The mimic yearly gives the ſame delights,
And in the mother's arms the clowniſh infant frights. DRYDEN.

The ancients in all probability would not have ſuffered this deformity in their maſks, if they had not reaped ſome benefit from it; and I cannot ſee in what this benefit could conſiſt, unleſs it were in the conveniency of being better able to faſten the horns proper for rendering the voice of the actors more ſonorous.

We ſee moreover by a paſſage of Quintilian, that the mouth of the maſk made ſo great an alteration

alteration in the laughter of the actor, as to render it a very diſagreable noiſe. This author adviſing orators to examine well their natural talents, in order to imbibe a taſte of declamation agreable to thoſe talents, ſays, it is poſſible to pleaſe with different qualities. He adds, that he has ſeen two famous comedians equally applauded, tho' their manner of declaiming was very different; but each had conſulted his inclination and talents in that manner of acting, which he had pitched upon. Demetrius, one of thoſe comedians, whom Juvenal ranks among the beſt of his time, and who had a very agreable voice, choſe for his part the perſonages of divinities, ladies of diſtinction, indulgent fathers, and fond lovers. Stratocles, the other comedian, who is mentioned alſo by Juvenal,[a] had a rough voice. He applied himſelf therefore intirely to act the character of auſtere fathers, paraſites, roguiſh ſervants, and in ſhort, of all thoſe perſonages which require a great deal of action. His geſture was lively, his motions animated, and he ventured to do ſeveral things capable of drawing the hiſſes of the houſe upon any other actor but himſelf. One of thoſe bold things which Stratocles ventured to do, was to laugh, tho' he was very ſenſible, ſays Quintilian, [b] *of the reaſons why laughing produces a diſagreable effect in a maſk,*

[a] Juv. ſat. 3.

[b] *Illum decuit curſus & agilitas, & vel parum conveniens perſonæ riſus, quem non ignarus rationis populo dabat.* QUINT. Inſt. lib. 11. cap. ult.

Laughter

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Laughter is not a disagreable thing of itself in a comic scene: This we are very well convinced of; for Moliere makes his personages sometimes burst out into a repeated laughter. A great fit of laughing must have echoed therefore in such a manner in the mouth of the mask, as to produce a very disagreable sound. This could not have happened, if the mouth and neighbouring parts of the inside of the mask had not been covered with a hard sonorous body, which made some alteration in the natural sound of the voice.

I shall venture to give here a conjecture intirely new, which may clear up a passage of Pliny that has been hitherto misunderstood: This is that the ancients, after having made use of brass to incrustate the masks, employed afterwards for the same purpose very thin plates of marble. Pliny, speaking of curious stones, says that the stone called calcophonos, or *brass-sounding*, is black, and that according to the etymology of its name, it produced, upon being touched, a sound like that of this metal. *Wherefore*, continues he, [a] *the comedians are advised to make use of it.* Now what use could the comedians have made of a stone with this property, were it not to incrustate a part of the mouth of their masks, after it had been sawed into very thin plates. Those masks which were of wood, as we learn from a poem of Prudentius against Symmachus, were very proper for receiving this incrustation. *Those who recite in tragedies*, says our poet, *cover their heads, with a wooden mask, and by the contrivance of the opening, they pour forth their turgid declamation.*

Ut tragicus cantor ligno tegit ora cavato,
Grande aliquid cujus per hiatum carmen anhelet.

Solinus, who wrote some time after Pliny, seems to inform us of the reason why the use of this stone was preferable to brass in the inward incrustation of a part of the mask. 'Tis that in the repercussion of the voice it does not alter the clearness of the sound, whereas the resounding of the brass throws always some confusion into the sound it reverberates. After observing that the *brass-sounding* stone resounds like this metal, he adds, [a] that it does not obstruct the clearness of the voice, when it is used with discretion.

We are able to judge of the attention the ancients had to whatever they thought capable of adding either ornament or ease to the execution of their theatrical pieces, by what Vitruvius tells us [b] concerning the manner of placing the *Echæa*, or brazen vessels proper for the echoes. This author speaking of the architecture of the theatres, enters into a

[a] *Calcophonos nigra est, sed illisa æris tinnitum reddit, tragœdis ut suadent gestanda.* PLIN. lib. 37. cap. 10.

[a] *Calcophonos resonat ut pulsata æra. Pudicè habitus servat vocis claritatem.* SOLIN. ed. SALMAS. c. 37.

[b] *Ita hac ratione vox à scena velut à centro profusa, se circum agens tacituque feriens singulorum vasorum cava, excitaverit quæstam claritatem & concentu convenientem sibi consonantiam.* VITRUV. lib. 5. cap. 5, &c.

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very long and methodical detail in relation to the form of those veſſels (which in all probability were nothing more than round concave plates of braſs) as well as to the places where they were to be fixt, that the voice of the actor might have a clearer and more tunable echo. He tells us that all thoſe veſſels ought to be of different tones, whereby he plainly indicates that the opening and the other dimenſions ought not to be the ſame; and as thoſe veſſels were placed at different diſtances from the actor, they muſt have been more or leſs eaſy to vibrate, in order to anſwer in concert. The ſame author complains that the Romans in his time neglected to place thoſe *Echæa* in their theatres, in imitation of the Greeks, who were very exact in this point. Very likely the Romans followed afterwards Vitruvius's advice, for Pliny complains [a] that the veſſels and vaults in which they were placed, abſorbed the actor's voice. He pretends that they had as bad an effect as the ſand of the orcheſtra, that is, of the ſpace between the ſtage and the foremoſt row of the ſpectators. On the other hand Caſſiodorus obſerves, [b] that the voice of thoſe who acted in tragedies being ſtrengthened by the concavities, produced ſuch a ſound

[a] *In theatrorum orcheſtris ſcrobe aut arena ſuper injecta, vox derotatur & in rudi parietum circumjectu doliis etiam inanibus.* PLIN. lib. 11. cap. 52.

[b] *Tragœdia ex vocis vaſtitate nominatur, quæ concavis repercuſſionibus roborata, talem ſonum videtur efficere, ut pœnè ab homine non credatur.* CASSIOD. ep. 51. lib. 1.

as one would ſcarce imagine could come from a human breaſt. Thoſe concavities could be nothing elſe but the *Echæa* and the horn of the maſk. We may judge by the attention the ancients had to theſe things, whether they neglected to ſearch for every kind of invention, that might enable the theatrical maſks to produce the effect, which, according to Gellius, had given them the name of *perſona*.

If the ancient writers could have foreſeen, that future generations would have been ſo much at a loſs to explain things, which were ſo eaſy to them, by reaſon they ſaw them every day, or becauſe every body had books that gave methodical accounts of them; they would have been more circumſtantial in their narrations. But they imagined that poſterity would be always in the way of being informed of the ſubject they ſpoke of; for which reaſon they ſeldom mentioned any more concerning it, than was neceſſary to ſupport an argument, to ground a compariſon, to explain a circumſtance, or to give the reaſon of an etymology. Even thoſe who have wrote methodically on poetry, architecture, and ſeveral other arts, judging it would be unneceſſary to commence their reaſonings and inſtructions with a previous deſcription of what was viſible to all the world, fall directly into precepts and diſcuſſions, which their cotemporaries found very clear, but are a kind of enigma to poſterity, becauſe the torch which gave light to their cotemporaries, is extinguiſhed. For example, as the ancients have not left us a deſcription

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tion of the inside of the *Coliseum*, architects are still in doubt concerning the nature of the inward distribution of the third floor, tho' the two first are yet almost intire. For the very same reason Antiquarians are at a loss how to explain a great many things in relation to the masks; which would not be the case perhaps, had we not lost the books that Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Rufus, and several other ancient writers wrote concerning the theatres and scenic representations. They would at least have instructed us in respect to several things that have escaped our knowledge, tho' they happened not to give us a thorough insight into every thing. The reader will find a catalogue of those writers whose books have perished, in the fourth chapter of the first part of a treatise concerning the theatres of the ancients, written by Boulanger the Jesuit.

But we know enough to conceive that the ancients found the masks of great use, by rendering the players capable of making themselves heard in theatres which had no solid covering, and where there were several spectators at twelve fathoms distance from the stage. Besides, as we have already observed, the masks deprived the spectators of no great advantage; for near two thirds of them were at too great a distance to perceive the effect of the passions on the countenance of the players, at least distinctly enough to behold them with pleasure. 'Tis impossible to distinguish these expressions at a particular distance in which one may be capable nevertheless

nevertheless of discerning the age and other remarkable strokes of the character of a mask. An expression must have been made with very frightful grimaces to be rendered discernible to the spectators at above five or six fathoms distance from the stage. I shall repeat here an observation I have made already in another place: 'Tis that the ancient players did not act like ours by the help of artificial lights, which illuminated the theatre on all sides, but by the assistance of day light, which must have left a great many shades upon the stage, as the light came in chiefly from the top. Now the justness and accuracy of declamation frequently requires the alteration of the strokes, in which an expression consists, to be hardly visible. This is what happens in particular circumstances, when the actor breaks out involuntarily into some external demonstration of his passion. We have therefore reason to make our players act without masks, and the ancients were not in the wrong to have theirs masked. But 'tis time to return to my subject.

CHAP.

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CHAP. XIII.

Of Saltation or the art of geſticulation, called by ſome authors the hypocritical muſic.

AS ſoon as a perſon is acquainted with the diviſion of the declamation uſed in the ancient theatres, he meets with proofs of it in a great many books, where he took no notice of them before he had been inſtructed with regard to this practice. He underſtands very clearly, for example, the paſſage where Suetonius ſays, [a] "that "Caligula was ſo paſſionately fond of ſinging and "dancing, that even in public ſpectacles he could "not refrain from ſinging aloud with the actor "who ſpoke, nor from making the ſame geſture "as the actor who geſticulated, either in order "to approve his geſture or to make ſome alter-"ation in it." 'Tis obſervable that Suetonius uſes here the words *ſinging* and *pronouncing*, as ſynonymous terms in the language of the theatre, and that he employs in the ſame manner the word *dance* and that of *geſticulating*. This author by ſo doing has only given the name of the genus to the ſpecies. The ancient art of geſticulation, purſuant

[a] *Canendi ac ſaltandi voluptate ita efferebatur, ut ne publicis quidem ſpectaculis temperaret, quominus et tragœdo pronuntianti concineret, & geſtum hiſtrionis quaſi laudans vel corrigens, palam effingeret.* SUET. in CAIO CÆS.

to

to what we have already obſerved, was one of the ſpecies into which the art of dancing was divided. Our dancing is a ſpecies of the art which the Greeks called Ὀρχησις and the Romans, *Saltatio*. But as the French tranſlators render theſe two words by that of dancing, this ambiguity has been the ſource of a great many falſe ideas. Let us ſee what diſcoveries we can make concerning this ſubject.

Plato ſays, [a] that the art by the Greeks called Ὀρχησις conſiſts, in the imitation of all the geſtures and motions of man. In fact, according to Varro, [b] the word *Saltatio* did not come from *Saltus*, which ſignifies *leaping*, but from the name of an Arcadian called *Salius*, who was the firſt that taught the Romans this art. The teſtimony of Varro cannot be balanced by any argument founded on the apparent etymology of the word *Saltatio*. Wherefore we muſt diveſt our ſelves of the prejudice drawn from the name of *Saltatio*, which might lead us to believe that every ſaltation derived its origin from the word *Saltus*, which ſignifies a *leap*.

'Tis eaſy to conceive that the artificial dances of the ancients, in which they imitated, for example, the leaps and gambols that peaſants are accuſtomed to make after drinking, or the

[a] PLATO de legibus, lib. 7.

[b] *Saltatores autem nominatos Varro dicit ab Arcade Salio, qui primus docuit Romanos adoleſcentes nobiles ſaltare.* ISID. orig. lib. 18. cap. 50.

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frantic caperings of Bacchanalians, were like to our dances. But the other dances of the ancients, in which they imitated the action of persons who do not leap, or who, to speak after our manner, do not dance, was only an imitation of the steps, attitudes, gestures, and in short of all the external demonstrations with which people are accustomed to accompany their discourse, or which they sometimes use in order to convey their sentiments without speech. 'Tis thus David danced before the ark, testifying by his attitude, as well as by his gestures and prostrations, the profound respect he had for the pledge of the covenant of the Lord with the Jewish people. We find by Dion, [a] that Heliogabalus *danced*, not only when he saw dramatic pieces acted from the place where it was customary for the emperor to be seated, but that he used also to dance as he walked, as well as in giving audience, in speaking to his soldiers, and even when he sacrificed. As odd and as crazy a prince as Heliogabalus was, yet he could not be supposed to dance after our manner in those circumstances which Dion relates. 'Tis therefore fit we should form an idea of the *Saltatio*, as of an art which included not only our dancing, but moreover the various rules of gesture. This is what I shall still endeavour to prove by the following authorities.

[a] DION. edit. Flac. p. 90.

Athenæus

Athenæus writes, [a] that Thelestes was the first inventer of that kind of dumb play, or dancing, without leaps or capers, which we shall hereafter distinguish by the name of the art of gesture: In this we shall only give it the name it bore frequently among the ancients. It was customary for them to call it *Chironomia*, and this word litterally translated signifies the rule or direction of the hand.

As the art of gesture was subdivided likewise into several species, one ought not to be surprized to find so great a number of different dances among the ancients, as enabled Meursius [b] to compose an intire dictionary of their names, ranged in alphabetical order. Of all the musical arts the ancients were fondest of this, and consequently cultivated it most: wherefore this art, which taught the player what he was to do on the stage, at the same time that it instructed the orator in the rules of gesture, was subdivided into several parts, some of which were suitable to the very gravest persons.

Whosoever has read the works of the ancients in their original languages, must remember they have frequently seen the word *Saltatio* employed on occasions where it could not be understood of a dance like ours. I hope nevertheless that I shall not be troublesome to the reader by producing

[a] ATHENÆUS. Deipn. lib. 1.
[b] ORCHEST. J. MEURSII.

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several other arguments to prove the ancients had many *Saltations* in which they did not dance.

Those authors who have given the division of the ancient Music, make the *Hypocritica* preside over their dance; this was what the Latins sometimes called the dumb music. We have already observed that its name came from that of ὑποκριτὴς, which in its proper sense signified a counterfeiter. But this was the common name the Greeks gave to their comedians.

The reader is already sensible, by what little I have said concerning this art, that the gestures, whose signification and use it prescribed, were not attitudes and movements which contribute to a genteel carriage; such as those of our dancers generally are. The gestures of the ancient dance must have expressed, and signified something; they must have been, as it were, a continued discourse. But let us proceed to the proofs I have promised.

Apuleius has left us the description of a representation of the judgment of Paris, executed by Pantomimes who played without speaking, and whose acting was called *Saltatio*. When this author speaks of the gate of the actors on the stage, he uses the word *incedere*, which properly signifies to walk. In another place, to signify that Venus spoke only with her eyes, he says [a] *she danced only with her eyes*. Besides 'tis observable

[a] *Et nonnunquam saltare solis oculis.* APUL. metam. lib. 10.

 that

that the ancients hardly ever praise the legs and feet of their *Saltatores*, or dancers; the parts they commend principally are the arms and hands. An epigram of the Greek Anthology reproaches an actor who had danced in the character of Niobe, for using no more motion than if he had been the very rock into which Niobe was metamorphosed, in short, that he never stirred out of his place, and consequently that he had not danced a single step.

Πάντα καθ' ἱστορίην ὀρχεύμενος, ἓν τὸ μέγιστον
Τῶν ἔργων παριδὼν, ἡνίασας μεγάλως.
Τὴν μὲν γὰρ Νιόβην ὀρχεύμενος, ὡς λίθος ἔσῃς,
Καὶ πάλιν ὢν Καπανεὺς, ἐξαπίνης ἔπεσες.
Ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τῆς Κανάκης ἀφυῶς, ὅτι σὺ ξίφος ἦν σοι,
Καὶ ζῶν ἐξῆλθες· τοῦτο παρ' ἱστορίην.

ANTHOL. Græc. lib. 2.

Nothing is more improper than a long dress for a person that dances after our manner. Now we find that the ancient *Saltatores* were clad in a long habit. Suetonius says [a] of Caligula, who was passionately fond of the *Saltation*: "That this prince "having sent for several persons of distinction to "his palace, he came in upon them very abruptly, clad in a Greek habit, which hung down "to his heels, and performed before them, the "gestures of a Monologue, accompanied with "instruments, after which he withdrew without

[a] *Magno tibiarum & scabellorum crepitu cum palla tunicaque talari prosiluit, & desaltato cantico abiit.* SUET. in CAIO.

 "speaking

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"ſpeaking a word." Velleius Paterculus relates [a] that Plancus, one of the Roman officers who followed Mark Antony's fortune, having attempted to counterfeit Glaucus (a famous fiſherman whom the ancients ſuppoſed to have been metamorphoſed into a Triton, when grown mad after eating of a certain herb, he jumped into the ſea) "he diſguiſed himſelf in the appear-"ance of a Sea-God, and walking on his knees, "danced the adventure of Glaucus." Now a man dancing upon his knees, would have been a very fooliſh ſpectacle.

What Quintilian ſays with reſpect to the neceſſity of ſending children to ſchools, where they might learn the art of *Saltation*, is ſufficient alone to convince us that the art of geſture was the principal part of it. *We muſt not*, ſays this author, [b] *be aſhamed to learn what we ſhall ſome day*

[a] *Cæruleatus & nudus, caputque redimitus arundine & caudam trahens, genibus innixus, Glaucum ſaltaſſet.* PATERC. hiſt. lib. 2.

[b] *Et certè quod facere oporteat non indignum eſt diſcere, præſertim hæc chironomia, quæ eſt (ut nomine ipſo declaratur) lex geſtûs, & ab illis heroicis temporibus orta ſit, & à ſummis Græciæ viris, & ab ipſo etiam Socrate probata . . . . . Neque id veteribus Romanis dedecori fuit: argumentum eſt, ſacerdotum nomine ac religione duratus ad hoc tempus ſaltatio . . . . . cujus etiam diſciplinæ uſus in noſtram uſque ætatem ſine reprehenſione diſcendit. A me tamen non ultra puerilis annos retinebitur, nec in his ipſis diu. Neque enim geſtum oratoris componi ad ſimilitudinem ſaltatoris volo, ſed ſubeſſe aliquid ex hac exercitatione.* QUINT. Inſt. lib. 1. cap. 11.

or other be obliged to practiſe. The Chironomy, which properly ſignifies the art of geſture, is a thing that has been known as early as the heroic times; and the greateſt men of Greece, and even Socrates himſelf, approved of it. Do not we ſee likewiſe by the ancient inſtitution of the dances of the Salian prieſts, that our old Romans did not contemn this art? In ſhort, the practice has been tranſmitted down to us, without being cenſured. But I would not adviſe a boy to be left too long with his maſter, ſince it is ſufficient for him to know and retain as much of this exerciſe as will give him a grace and eaſy air in his action. For the geſture of an orator ought to be very different from that of a dancer.

And yet Macrobius has preſerved a fragment of one of Scipio Æmilianus's harangues, in which the deſtroyer of Carthage ſpeaks with great warmth againſt the inconveniencies attending the ſchools, where they taught the art of geſture. *Our young people*, ſays Scipio, [a] *are ſent to a ſchool of comedians to learn to recite; an exerciſe which our anceſtors conſidered as a ſervile profeſſion. Beſides, when the children of people of diſtinction frequent thoſe ſchools in which the art of* ſaltation *is taught, do they not mix with the moſt ſcandalous company?* We find likewiſe by an oration of Cicero in defence of

[a] *Eunt in ludum hiſtrionum, diſcunt cantare, quod majores noſtri ingenuis probro duci voluerunt. Eunt, inquam, in ludum ſaltatorium inter cinædos, virgines pueriique ingenui* MACROB. SATURN. lib. 3. cap. 8.

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Muræna, whom Cato had reproached for being a *dancer*, that the practice of *Saltation* was not tolerated among people of note, unleſs under very particular circumſtances.

Let us return to Quintilian. This author ſays in another place, [a] That *an orator muſt not pronounce like a comedian, nor geſticulate like a dancer.* Now one of his reaſons is in all probability, becauſe the geſtures taught by the art of *Saltation*, were not intirely deſigned for giving a better grace and air; nor were they, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, geſtures void of ſenſe, but frequently ſuch as had a very ſenſible meaning; ſuch as even ſpoke. Now theſe ſignificative geſtures are of two ſorts, the one natural, and the other artificial.

Natural geſtures are thoſe which naturally accompany the ſpeech. This geſture, which, to make uſe of a poetic expreſſion, ſpeaks to the eyes, gives a ſtronger energy to diſcourſe, and animates at the ſame time the ſpeaker and the hearer. If a man of any vivacity is hindered to geſticulate when he ſpeaks, his expreſſion becomes languid, and the fire of his eloquence is extinguiſhed. On the other hand an orator, whom we both ſee and hear, moves us much more, than one whoſe voice we hear without beholding his geſtures. But 'tis very rare that the natural geſture ſignifies any thing diſtinctly, without the

[a] *Non Comœdum in pronunciatione, non ſaltatorem in geſtu facio.* QUINT. Inſt. lib. 1. cap. 12.

aſſiſtance

aſſiſtance of language. This happens only in two caſes. The firſt is, when the natural geſture ſignifies an *affection*, ſuch as a head-ach, or a fit of impatience. But it is not even then ſufficient to render the circumſtances of this affection intelligible. Secondly, it ſignifies ſomething without the help of ſpeech, when it is the ſame ſign as that which commonly accompanies a certain expreſſion. 'Tis then ſuppoſed, that the perſon who uſes this geſture, does it with the intention of ſaying what is commonly ſaid when people make this external ſign. The geſture of thoſe who live ſouth of us, being much more diſtinct than ours, 'tis much eaſier to comprehend the meaning of it, when it is uſed without ſpeech, than to underſtand what our geſture ſignifies under the like circumſtance. But theſe natural geſtures have always a very imperfect, and frequently even an equivocal ſignification.

A man therefore who wants to expreſs diſtinctly without ſpeaking, any other thing beſides an *affection*, is obliged to have recourſe to thoſe artificial demonſtrations and geſtures, which do not derive their ſignification from nature, but from human inſtitution. A proof of their being only artificial ſigns, is, that like words they are underſtood only in ſome countries. The very ſimpleſt of theſe geſtures bear no ſignification but in a particular province; for in other parts people make uſe of different ſigns to expreſs the ſame thing. For example, the geſture of the hand, which is uſed in France when calling a perſon, is

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not the ſame as that which is practiſed in Italy. A Frenchman makes a ſign to thoſe whom he wants to come towards him, by lifting up his right hand, with the fingers turned upwards, and drawing it ſeveral times towards his body; whereas an Italian, to make the ſame ſign, lowers his right hand, and turns his fingers towards the ground. People in different countries have a different manner of ſaluting one another. The demonſtrations and geſtures which a perſon, who will not or cannot ſpeak, are not exactly the ſame as thoſe which are uſed with ſpeech. One who has a mind to expreſs by ſigns and without uttering a word, *my father is dead*, is obliged to ſupply the want of words with ſtudied ſigns far different from thoſe he would uſe in pronouncing this ſentence. Theſe ſigns may be called artificial, or to expreſs it logically, *inſtituted geſtures*. 'Tis known that logic divides all its ſigns into two ſorts, natural, and inſtituted. Thus the ſmoke is a natural ſign of fire, but a crown is only an inſtituted ſign, and an emblem of royalty. Thus a man who beats his breaſt, uſes a natural geſture, which expreſſes an amazement or ſurprize: a perſon who deſcribes by geſticulating, a forehead incircled with a diadem, uſes only an inſtituted geſture, which ſignifies a crowned head.

Tho' in common repreſentations geſture and ſpeech accompanied one another on the ſtage, yet the geſture was taught in ſchools as an art that ſhewed the manner of expreſſing one's ſelf, even without ſpeaking. Wherefore 'tis highly

probable,

probable, that the profeſſors of this art, inſtructed their pupils not only in every imaginable method of making themſelves underſtood by the help of natural geſtures, but that they even taught them how to expreſs their thoughts by making uſe of inſtituted ones. The orator had no occaſion to employ thoſe artificial geſtures to make himſelf underſtood. Beſides, it was almoſt impoſſible but ſeveral of thoſe geſtures muſt have been incompatible with the decency he was to obſerve in his declamation. Here you have, methinks, the reaſon why Quintilian ſo often forbids his orator to imitate the geſticulation of dancers or *Saltatores*.

What Quintilian ſays in another place [a] ſeems to confirm my conjecture. *All the abovementioned geſtures are performed naturally at the ſame time that the words are pronounced. But there is another kind of geſtures, which are ſignificative only inaſmuch as they deſcribe the thing which we want to expreſs by their aſſiſtance. Such is the geſture repreſenting the action of a phyſician feeling a pulſe, made uſe of to ſignify a ſick perſon. Nothing is more vicious in an*

[a] *Et ii quidem de quibus ſum locutus cum ipſis vocibus naturaliter exeunt geſtus: alii ſunt qui res imitatione ſignificant; ut ſi ægrum, tentantis venas medici ſimilitudine . . . . . oſtendat; quod eſt genus quàm longiſſime in actione fugiendum. Abeſſe enim plurimùm à Saltatore debet Orator, ut ſit geſtus ad ſenſum magis quàm ad verba accommodatus: quod etiam hiſtrionibus paulò gravioribus facere moris fuit.* QUINT. Inſt. lib. 11. cap. 3.

orator

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orator than to use this kind of gesture in his declamation, which should be intirely different from that of a dancer. *The orator ought to make his gesture agree with the sentiment he expresses, and not with the particular signification of the word he pronounces. We see, that even comedians who endeavour to act with due decorum, submit to this precept, that is, they either never, or but very seldom, make use of instituted signs in their declamation.*

Cicero says the same thing pretty near as Quintilian. "He allows [a] a person who is brought "up to the bar, to endeavour to acquire the "grace and free air of Roscius, but he will not "have him mould his gesture in imitation of "that which was practised by comedians." Very likely the greatest part of the actors did not do as those whom Quintilian calls *Histriones paulò graviores*. A great many comedians chose to make use of the instituted rather than the natural signs, because the former seemed fitter to excite laughter, as well as to render the action more animated. Nevertheless persons of a very good taste disapproved of this practice. Cicero says, [b] "that

[a] *Quis neget opus esse in hoc oratorio motu statuque, Roscii gestu & venustate? Tamen nemo suaserit studiosis dicendi adolescentibus in gestu discendo, histrionum more elaborare.* Cic. de orat. lib. 1.

[b] *Nam & palæstrici motus sæpe sunt odiosiores, & histrionum nonnulli gestus inepti non vacant offensione, & in utroque genere quæ sunt recta & simplicia laudantur.* Cic. de off. lib. 1.

"plain

"plain and natural gestures are the most agre-"able in theatrical entertainments; and that the "comedians offend the sensible spectator, when "they use silly ridiculous gestures, as it some-"times happens."

We find a very curious description of the art of gesticulation in a letter written by Cassiodorus to Albinus, commissioning him to make the people decide whether Theodoron or Halandius was the best actor, as the point in question was to promote the cleverest of the two. *Our ancestors*, says Cassiodorus, [a] *gave the name of* MUTE MUSIC *to that art, which shews how to speak without opening the mouth, to express every thing by gestures, and even to render intelligible by certain movements as well as by different attitudes of the body, what we should find very difficult to communicate by a continued discourse, or a whole page in writing.* I fancy nevertheless that the instituted signs did not bear always a distinct signification of what they were meant to express, tho' a kind of allusion might have been observed in their first institution to the things they signified. The *Mimus is out*, says [b] Apuleius. We shall see by what St Austin says of the Pantomimes, that the relation between the gesture and the thing signified was not

[a] *Hanc partem musicæ disciplinæ mutam majores nostri nominaverunt, scilicet quæ ore clauso manibus loquitur, & quibusdam gesticulationibus facit intelligi, quod vix narrante lingua aut scripturæ textu possit agnosci.* CASSIODORUS Var. epist. lib. 1. ep. 20.

[b] *Mimus hallucinatur.* APUL. FLOR. lib. 3.

so

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so clear, as to be understood without an interpreter by those who had not learnt the language of the ancient dance.

The eastern nations have several sorts of dances like those described by Cassiodorus; and all the relations of travellers, especially thro' Persia, speak of these dances. The states of Asia have been as subject to political revolutions as those of Europe; but they seem to have been less subject to moral revolutions. The manner of dress, as well as the other national customs of Asia, were never subject to so much change, as they have been, and still are in the western parts of Europe.

We find that the ancients called the same person indiscriminately, *Saltator* and *Gesticulator*, because the *Saltation* was the genus, and the *Gesticulation* the species. The orator Hortensius, Cicero's cotemporary and rival, was in his manner and dress what we call finical and affected. It was said of him, that after having been a long time an actor, he was become at length an actress; for which reason they used to call him Dionysia, which, according to Gellius, [a] who gives this recital, was the name of a celebrated woman-dancer. On the other hand the action of a comedian was also called gesticulation, as may be seen in the recital of the adventure of Andronicus the poet. Thus it was not only customary to use the word *dancing*,

[a] *Torquatus non jam histrionem esse Hortensium diceret, sed gesticulariam, Dionysiamque eum notissimæ Saltatriculæ nomine appellaret.* AUL. GELL. Noct. Attic. lib. 1. cap. 9.

when

when speaking of gestures, but likewise to apply it to the action of comedians. *Saltare* and *gestum agere* were used so indiscriminately, that they were frequently said to *dance a dramatic piece* instead of reciting it on the stage; and this not only when speaking of the representations of Pantomimes, who, as we shall see presently, acted without opening their lips, but likewise when mentioning the representations of common tragedies or comedies, in which the recitation of the verses formed a part of the execution of the play.

Whenever you write to me, says Ovid, to a friend who had sent him word that the Medea or some other composition of this poet was acted with great applause, *that the theatre is full, as often as my pieces are danced; and that my verses are always clapt.*

Carmina cum pleno saltari nostra theatro,
Versibus & plaudi scribis, amice, meis.
OVID. Trist. 5. eleg. 7.

Gellius, to signify that the actors who formerly pronounced, used likewise to gesticulate, says, [a] *that those who in his time sung without stirring, were accustomed before to dance while they were singing.*

Juvenal says, that the carver at the better sort of tables, used to *dance* while he was carving. Now 'tis possible to carve and gesticulate; but

[a] *Saltabundi autem canebant quæ nunc stantes canunt.* Id. ibid. lib. 20. cap. 2.

one

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one cannot carve and dance after our manner. Beſides, this poet adds by way of raillery, that there is a kind of merit in cutting up a pullet and a hare with a varied geſture ſuited to each operation. There were particular ſchools at Rome for this kind of *Saltation*.

Structorem interea, ne qua indignatio deſit,
Saltantem ſpectat, & chironomonta volanti
Cultello, donec peragat dictata magiſtri
Omnia; nec minimo ſanè diſcrimine refert,
Quo geſtu lepores & quo gallina ſecetur.
JUV. ſat. 5.

Mean while thy indignation yet to raiſe,
The carver dancing round each diſh, ſurveys
With flying knife; and as his art directs,
With proper geſtures ev'ry fowl diſſects.
Mr WILLIAM BOWLES.

In fine, Ariſtides Quintilianus, after ſpeaking of the friendſhip which Cicero had for Roſcius; charmed with his exactneſs in obſerving meaſure, and with the elegance of his geſture, calls this celebrated comedian a *dancer*. He gives him the name of ὀρχηστὴς, which has the ſame ſignification as the Latin word *ſaltator*; but we ſhall ſee preſently by a paſſage of Caſſiodorus that this Greek word had been latinized. In effect, tho' Roſcius ſpoke often on the ſtage, yet Cicero [a] generally commends him for his geſture.

Ergo ille corporis motu tantum amorem ſibi conciliarat à nobis omnibus. CIC. pro ARCHIA.

Cicero,

Cicero, as Macrobius relates [a], uſed to contend ſometimes with Roſcius, who ſhould expreſs beſt the ſame ſentiment in different ways, each of the diſputants making uſe of thoſe talents in which he particularly excelled. Roſcius therefore rendered by a mute action the ſenſe of the phraſe which Cicero had compoſed and recited; and proper arbiters were to judge who had ſucceeded beſt. CICERO changed afterwards the words and turn of the phraſe, without enervating the ſenſe; and Roſcius was obliged in his turn to expreſs the ſenſe by other geſtures, without weakening it by his mute action.

Thus we have ſaid enough concerning the art of Saltation conſidered in its full extent. 'Tis plain by what has been here advanced, that the ancients practiſed thoſe leſſons in their religious ceremonies, at table, and on other occaſions. But our ſubject does not require us to follow the Saltation thro' all the uſes it was applied to; let us come now more particularly to the *theatrical Saltation*.

[a] *Et certè ſatis conſtat contendere eum cum biſtrione ſolitum, utrum ille ſæpius eandem ſententiam variis geſtibus efficeret, an ipſe per eloquentiæ copiam ſermone diverſo pronuntiaret,* MACROB. SATURN. lib. 2. cap. 10.

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CHAP. XIV.

Of the theatrical Dance or Saltation. How the player that geſticulated, could act in concert with the other who recited. Of the dance of the Chorus.

THE art of geſture ſuitable to the theatrical declamation, was ſubdivided into three different methods. The firſt taught the [a] *Emmelia* proper for tragic declamation. The ſecond the *Cordax*, fitted to the declamation of comedies. The third ſhewed the *Sicinnis*, a geſture proper for the recitation of thoſe dramatic pieces which the ancients called Satyres. The perſonages who recited in theſe three kinds of poems, uſed ſeveral geſticulations particularly adapted to each.

Lucian nevertheleſs in his treatiſe of dancing, ſays, that in executing the comic pieces, they frequently uſed to mix the proper geſticulations of ſatyre with thoſe of comedy, that is the *Sicinnis* with the *Cordax*.

How was it poſſible (ſome will ſay) for the ancients to reduce theſe methods to writing, and to find out notes and characters, which ſhould expreſs all the attitudes and movements of the body?

[a] ATHENÆUS, lib. 1.

Really

Really I can't tell; but Feuillée's Choregraphy, which I have already made mention of, ſhews the thing was poſſible. There is no more difficulty in learning to make geſtures by notes, than in knowing by notes how to make ſteps and figures. Now that the latter is poſſible, is demonſtrated by Feuillée's book.

Tho' we have not reduced the uſe of geſtures into an art, and for want of ſufficiently canvaſſing this ſubject we have not conſequently divided the objects as much as the ancients; yet 'tis viſible that tragedy and comedy have their own peculiar geſtures. The action, attitude, carriage, and countenance of our actors who recite in tragedy, are not the ſame as when they act in comedy. Directed merely by inſtinct they render us ſenſible of the principles on which the ancients founded the diviſion of the art of theatrical geſture, and reduced it into three different methods. *Nature*, as Cicero obſerves, [a] *has given each paſſion, and ſentiment its particular expreſſion on the countenance, as well as its proper tone and geſture.* The paſſions generally treated in tragedy are not the ſame as thoſe of comedy.

We find ſeveral things in a chapter of Quintilian's Inſtitutes, where he ſpeaks more copiouſly than elſewhere of the geſture ſuitable to an orator, which plainly indicate that the comedians had particular ſchools in his time, where they were

[a] *Omnis enim motus animi ſuum quendam à natura habet vultum, & ſonum & geſtum.* CIC. de orat.

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instructed in the right theatrical gesture. Here he dissuades his pupil sometimes from following what the comedians taught in relation to some particular part of their action; and at other times he cites them as good masters. *Those who teach the Scenic art*, says he in another part of the same chapter, [a] *find that the gesture made only with the head, is a bad gesture.* It even appears that those professors had what we call terms of art. Quintilian speaking of the countenance which an orator should shew for some time before he has commenced his discourse, when the eyes of the whole audience are fixt upon him, says [b], that the comedians gave in their style to this studied silence the appellation of *pauses*.

As the ancient players could use but very seldom that kind of gesture which we have distinguished by the name of *instituted*; in short, as their *Saltation* was of a particular kind, it was natural for them to have separate schools and professors. Besides, they were obliged to be masters of an art which particularly belonged to them, I mean that of adapting the time and cadence of their gesture to the recitation of the *Singer*, who sometimes spoke in their stead. I shall endeavour to explain here more intelligibly than I have hitherto done, how this point could be effected, that is, how the action of the player who gesti-

[a] *Solo capite gestum facere scenici quoque doctores vitiosum putarunt.* QUINT. Inst. lib. 11. cap. 3.

[b] *In hac cunctatione sunt quædam non indecentes, ut vocant Scenici, moræ.* Id. ibid.

culated,

culated, could accompany the pronunciation of the person that recited. Before I gave this last explication, I thought proper to wait 'till my reader had been a little better acquainted with the subject; tho' I exposed myself thereby to the danger of falling into some repetitions. The reader will please to remember what we have already observed, that the Hypocritical music presided over the *Saltation*. *Now Music*, says Quintilian, [a] *directs the movements of the body, as it regulates the progression of the voice.* The Hypocritical music shewed therefore how to follow the measure in gesticulating, as the Metrical music taught the method of following it in reciting. The *Hypocritica* made use of the *Rhythmica*; for the musical arts could not each of them have their particular districts so separated, but that they sometimes met in the same lesson; one musical art depending frequently on the assistance of another. This is already something to our purpose.

The actor therefore who recited, and the person that gesticulated, were obliged to follow the same measure and time. We have seen in Quintilian, [b] that they endeavoured to establish a proportion between the gesture and words of the orator, so that his action should be neither too quick, nor broken. Very likely this

[a] *Numeros musice duplices habet, in vocibus & in corpore.* Id. ibid. lib. 1. cap. 10.

[b] See chapter 2. of the third part.

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idea arose from hence, that the actor who recited on the stage ought to pronounce only a certain number of words, while the other made a particular gesture. The former in all probability was obliged to pronounce a greater number of words, when the second made another gesture. Be this as it will, 'tis certain, they both followed the same measure beaten by the same person, who had before him the verses recited, whose syllables, as we have already observed, pointed out the time. Above these verses they noted the gestures which the players were to make, measure by measure. The Rhythmical music, says Aristides Quintilianus, [a] regulates the gesture, as well as the recitation of the verses.

In what manner soever this was done, we know that the actors agreed perfectly well in their different parts. Seneca says, [b] *'Tis surprizing to see the gesture of eminent comedians on the stage overtake and even keep pace with speech, notwithstanding the velocity of the tongue.* 'Tis plain that Seneca's meaning does not relate here to a person who executes both at the same time; for there is nothing less surprizing than to see his gesture move as quick as his pronunciation. The thing is very natural; and there can be no room for admiration, but when one actor recites,

[a] ARISTIDES de Musica.

[b] *Mirari solemus scenæ peritos, quod in omnem significationem rerum & effectuum parata illorum est manus, & verborum velocitatem gestus assequitur.* SENECA. ep. 121.

while

while another gesticulates. We find likewise by a passage of Cicero, [a] that a comedian who dropped a gesture out of time, was hissed as much as one who was mistaken in pronouncing a verse. Lucian observes also, that a gesture not in its proper measure was esteemed a capital fault in an actor; which occasioned the proverb among the Greeks, *To commit a solecism with the hand.*

As the art of Saltation is lost, it would be a rash attempt to pretend to divine all the particulars of a practice perfected by experience and the reflections of many thousands of persons. What we know for certain is, that the people were very sensible when there was any mistake committed. 'Tis true, the habit of being present at those spectacles, rendered them, as Cicero observes, [b] so very delicate, that they found fault even with inflexions and false concords, tho' these concords produce a good effect, when managed with art.

To return to the art of gesture, there is no manner of doubt but the ancient comedians excelled in this part of the declamation. They had very great natural dispositions for it, if we may form a judgment of them, by what we observe in their

[a] *Histrio si paululum se moveat extra numerum, aut si versus pronuntiatus est syllabâ unâ longior, aut brevior, exsibilatur & exploditur.* CIC. in Parad.

[b] *Quantò molliores sunt & delicatiores in cantu flexiones & falsæ voculæ quàm certæ & severæ, quibus tamen non modo austeri, sed si sæpius fiant, multitudo ipsa reclamat.* CIC. de orat. lib. 3.

countrymen

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countrymen our co-temporaries. They applied themſelves with great care and aſſiduity to their profeſſion, as we ſhall preſently make appear; and if they failed or were careleſs in their action, the ſpectators, who were capable of judging, took care to ſet them right. Tertullian ſays, [a] *That this geſticulation was as bewitching as the diſcourſe of the ſerpent who ſeduced the firſt woman.* Had the critics, who have attempted to cenſure or elucidate Ariſtotle's poetics, been attentive to the ſignification of the word Ὄρχησις or *Saltatio*, they would not have found it ſo unaccountable that the ancient chorus ſhould *dance*, even in the moſt ſolemn and melancholy parts of tragedy. 'Tis eaſy to conceive that thoſe dances were nothing elſe but geſtures and ſigns, by which the perſonages of the chorus expreſſed their ſentiments; whether they ſpoke, or teſtified by a mute action, how much they were moved with the event in which they were concerned. This declamation obliged frequently the chorus to walk upon the ſtage, and as the evolutions which a great number of people make at the ſame time, cannot be rightly executed without being previouſly concerted, (unleſs they were to fall into the irregular motions of a multitude,) the ancients took care to preſcribe certain rules to the ſteps of the chorus. Theſe regular evolutions have occaſioned our critics to take the *Saltation* of the chorus, for a kind of balet or dancing after our manner.

[a] *Ipſe geſtus colubrina vis eſt.* TERTULL. de Spectac.

The

The chorus at firſt had particular maſters who taught them their parts; but the poet Æſchilus, [b] who made a very particular ſtudy of the art of theatrical repreſentations, undertook to inſtruct them himſelf, and his example, it ſeems, was followed by the reſt of the Greek poets.

We muſt not therefore form an idea of the figure which thoſe ancient chorus's made at the Athenian and Roman theatres, from what we imagine we ſhould behold on our ſtages, were our chorus to declaim. We fancy to ourſelves ſomething like the immoveable chorus of the opera, compoſed of fellows the greateſt part of whom do not even know how to walk right, and who of courſe muſt render the moſt moving ſcenes ridiculous by their aukward action. We imagine ſomething in the ſame nature as the chorus of our comedies, conſiſting of underſtrappers, ſupernumeraries, and the very worſt actors, who perform but wretchedly a part which they are not uſed to. But the chorus of the ancient tragedies was executed by able and experienced actors, and the expence that attended this repreſentation was ſo very great, that a particular law was paſſed at Athens, ordaining the magiſtrates to defray it.

In order therefore to form a juſt notion of the ancient chorus, we muſt repreſent to ourſelves a great number of excellent actors, giving anſwer to a perſonage who addreſſes his diſcourſe to them.

[b] ATHEN. lib. 1.

We

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We are to fancy each actor of the chorus, using geſtures and attitudes ſuitable to what he intended actually to expreſs, and proper to the particular character he repreſented. We are to imagine we ſee the old man, the child, the woman, and the young man of the chorus teſtifying their joy, or affliction, or their other paſſions, by particular geſtures ſuitable to their age, and ſex. Such a ſpectacle, methinks, was not the leaſt moving ſcene of the ancient tragedy. Thus we find [a] that one of the chorus's of Æſchilus made ſeveral pregnant women fall in labor in the very theatre at Athens. This accident induced the Athenians to reduce the number of the actors of thoſe terrible chorus's to fifteen or twenty, which before were ſometimes compoſed of fifty perſonages. Some paſſages of our new operas, where the poet makes a principal perſonage addreſs his ſpeech to the chorus who ſay a few words to him in anſwer, have been very well received, tho' the actors of the chorus do not declaim. I am ſurprized that this practice of the ancients has not been more followed by modern poets.

In fine, we have ſeen a chorus, which without ſpeaking imitated only the mute action of the chorus of the ancient tragedy, meet with great ſucceſs and applauſe at the opera, when they were executed with ſome attention. I mean thoſe balets which had ſcarce any dancing movements, but were only compoſed of geſtures, exter-

[a] *In the tragedy of the Eumenides.*

nal

nal ſigns, and in a word, of a dumb ſhew; which Lulli placed in the funeral pomp of Pſyche, and in that of Alceſtes, as well as in the ſecond act of Theſeus, where the poet introduces ſome old men a dancing; as alſo the balet of the fourth act of Atys, and in the firſt ſcene of the fourth act of Iſis, where Quinault brings on the ſtage the inhabitants of the *Hyperborean* regions. The above-mentioned demi-chorus's (if I be allowed this expreſſion) afforded a very engaging ſpectacle, when Lulli had them executed by dancers who were under perfect ſubjection to him, and who neither durſt make a dancing ſtep when he had forbidden it, nor omit executing their proper geſture exactly at the time preſcribed. It was very eaſy, by ſeeing the execution of theſe dances, to comprehend how the meaſure could regulate the geſture at the theatres of the ancients. The ingenious perſon here mentioned, had conceived by the ſole force of his imagination, that the repreſentation might derive ſomething of a pathos even from the mute action of the chorus; for I do not apprehend that he hit upon this idea by means of the writings of the ancients, whoſe paſſages relating to the dancing of the chorus, had not been yet underſtood in the manner now explained.

Lulli had ſo great an attention to theſe balets, that in compoſing them he employed a particular dancing-maſter, whoſe name was Olivet. This was the perſon (and not Des Broſſes or Beauchamps, whom Lulli commonly

made

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made uſe of) that compoſed the balets of the funeral pomp of Pſyche, and Alceſtes, and likewiſe thoſe of the old men of Theſeus, of the melancholy dreams of Atys, and the quakers and ſhiverers of Iſis. The latter was compoſed intirely of geſtures and external ſigns of people ſhivering with cold; and had not ſo much as a ſingle ſtep of our ordinary dance. 'Tis alſo obſervable that thoſe balets which were very acceptable at that time, were executed by dancers almoſt unpractiſed in the buſineſs to which Lulli applied them. But 'tis time now to return to my ſubject.

CHAP. XV.

Obſervations concerning the manner in which the dramatic pieces of the ancients were repreſented. Of the paſſion which the Greeks and Romans had for theatrical entertainments; as alſo of the ſtudy the actors made of their art, and the recompences they received.

THE operations of our ſenſes cannot be ſupplied by the imagination. As we have not therefore been preſent at the repreſentation of theatrical pieces, in which one actor recites, while another geſticulates, it would be wrong, methinks, to commend, and ſtill more ſo to condemn poſitively the ancient diviſion of the declamation.

tion. I have already taken notice that there was not that abſurdity in the thing, as appears to us at firſt ſight: for we cannot tell how far the repreſentation might have been imbelliſhed by circumſtances as well as by the ability of the actors. Several learned men of the northern parts of Europe have decided upon the mere authority of a narrative, that our operas are very ridiculous ſpectacles, and fit only for the amuſement of children; and yet they changed their opinion afterwards upon ſeeing theſe repreſentations. They had been convinced by experience (which alone in this caſe was capable of perſuading them) that a mother, tho' ſhe bewails in muſic the loſs of her children, is nevertheleſs a perſonage capable of exciting ſentiments of compaſſion and ſorrow.

The puppet-ſhews in which the declamation is divided, amuſe us, notwithſtanding the action is executed by a kind of automaton. It will ſignify nothing to ſay that this childiſh ſhow diverts us, becauſe the ridiculouſneſs of the execution is perfectly well adapted to that of the ſubject. The puppet-opera of La Grille's invention, which was eſtabliſhed at Paris about the year 1674, drew the whole town for two winters ſucceſſively; and yet this ſpectacle was a common opera, with this difference, that the part of the action was executed by a large puppet, whoſe geſtures were ſuited to the recitatives ſung by a muſician, who emitted his voice thro' an opening contrived in the floor of the ſtage. I have ſeen operas repreſented in this manner in Italy, and yet no body thought them

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them a ridiculous ſpectacle. The operas which a great cardinal in his youth took a pleaſure in exhibiting after this manner, were vaſtly entertaining, becauſe the puppets being near four feet high, bore a greater reſemblance to human perſonages. Who is it then that can pretend to determine that thoſe very ſpectacles would be diſagreable, were a company of excellent actors, whom we had been already accuſtomed to ſee maſked; were they, I ſay, to execute perfectly the geſticulation, which a puppet can execute but very indifferently?

The conduct and writings of the Romans ſufficiently ſhew they were a people that did not want ſenſe or judgment. When they determined in favor of that kind of declamation, in which the geſture and pronunciation were frequently executed by different actors, they had already been acquainted for upwards of a hundred and twenty years with the natural and plain manner of reciting, and yet they thought proper to quit it for the other more compoſite manner.

Beſides, the immenſe expence the Greeks and Romans were at in the repreſentation of their dramatic pieces, is a convincing argument of the attention they gave to thoſe entertainments. Now would not this attention which continued during the ſpace of eight hundred years (for ſo long were the theatres open at Rome after the adventure of Livius Andronicus) would it not, I ſay, have been ſufficient to undeceive the Romans in reſpect

reſpect to the diviſion of the declamation between two actors, had this diviſion been ſo abſurd a thing as we are apt at firſt to imagine. We muſt therefore diveſt ourſelves of our firſt prejudice, in the ſame manner as men of ſenſe throw off thoſe prejudices which incline them to diſlike the modes and cuſtoms of foreign countries.

The repreſentation of three of Sophocles's tragedies, coſt the Athenians more than the war of Peloponneſus. We know what immenſe expences the Romans were at in erecting theatres, amphitheatres, and circus's, even in the provincial cities. Some of thoſe buildings which are ſtill intire, are the moſt valuable monuments of ancient architecture; and we admire even the ruins of thoſe that are fallen. The Roman hiſtory abounds alſo with facts which evince the immoderate paſſion the people had for ſhows, and that both princes and private perſons put themſelves to immenſe expences to gratify them. I ſhall mention what regards only the payment of the actors. Macrobius ſays,[a] that Æſopus, a celebrated tragic player of whom we have already made mention, and who was Cicero's co-temporary, left to a ſon of his, whom Horace,[b] and Pliny mention as a famous ſpend-thrift, a fortune of five millions of livres which he had gained by his profeſſion. We read in Pliny that Roſcius the

[a] MACROB. Saturn. lib. 2. cap 10.
[b] HOR. ſat. l. 2. c. 10. PLIN. l. 10.

comedian,

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comedian, an intimate friend of Cicero, had upwards of a hundred thouſand livres a year for his ſalary [a]. This player's allowance muſt have been increaſed ſince the time in which Pliny ſtates his income, becauſe Macrobius aſſures us, [b] he received near nine hundred livres a day of the public money, which ſum was intirely for his own uſe, being under no obligation of dividing it with the company.

The oration which Cicero pronounced for this very Roſcius, juſtifies the account given by Pliny and Macrobius. The principal point of Roſcius's law-ſuit related to a ſlave, whom Fannius pretended to have committed to Roſcius's care, in order to teach him the theatrical art, after which Roſcius and Fannius were to ſell the ſlave, and divide the money betwixt them. Cicero does not allow there was any ſuch agreement, but pretends that Panurgus (for ſo the ſlave was called) muſt be ſuppoſed to be the intire property of Roſcius, becauſe his worth as a comedian exceeded by far his value as a ſlave. Panurgus's perſon, adds Cicero, is not worth thirty piſtoles, but Roſcius's eleve is worth twenty thouſand crowns. Fannius's ſlave could have earnt but eighteen

[a] *Quippe cum jam apud majores noſtros Roſcius biſtrio ſeſtertium quingenta millia annua meritaſſe prodatur.* PLIN. lib. 7. cap. 39.

[b] *Tanta fuit gratia ut mercedem diurnam de publico mille denarios ſine gregalibus ſolus acceperit.* MACROB. Saturn. lib. 2. cap. 10.

pence

pence a day, but Roſcius's pupil can earn eighteen piſtoles. Can you imagine, ſays Cicero in another place, that ſo diſintereſted a perſon as Roſcius would attempt to appropriate, at the expence of his honor, a ſlave of the value only of thirty piſtoles; Roſcius, who for theſe twelve years has acted for us gratis, a generoſity that has deprived him of two millions of livres? I do not, adds Cicero, ſet too high a rate on the ſalary he could have received; we ſhould have given at leaſt as much to him as to Dionyſia. We have already taken notice of this actreſs. Thus we ſee in what manner the actors were payed during the time of the republic. Macrobius ſays, that Julius Cæſar gave Laberius twenty thouſand crowns, to engage this poet to act in a piece which he had compoſed for the ſtage: one might find ſeveral other prodigalities of the like nature under the other emperors. At length the emperor Marcus Aurelius, [a] who is frequently diſtinguiſhed by the appellation of Antoninus the philoſopher, gave orders that the actors in ſhows which certain magiſtrates were obliged to exhibit to the people, ſhould not demand more than five pieces of gold for every repreſentation; and that the perſon who defrayed the expences, ſhould not give them more than double that price. Thoſe gold pieces were of the ſame value pretty near as our French Lewidores of thirty to a mark, which are current for twenty four li-

[a] *Capit. in* M. ANTONINO.

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vres. Livy finiſhes his diſſertation on the riſe and progreſs of theatrical repreſentations at Rome, with obſerving, [a] *that a diverſion which had ſo inconſiderable a beginning, was degenerated into ſo magnificent and ſumptuous a ſpectacle, that the very wealthieſt kingdoms were hardly able to ſupport the expence of it.* As the Romans themſelves were become for the moſt part declaimers and geſticulators, no wonder they had ſo great an eſteem for their actors. The elder Seneca ſays, in the introduction to his firſt book of controverſies, [b] that the young people in his time made the ſtudy of theſe arts their moſt ſerious occupation.

This evil continually increaſed. Ammianus Marcellinus, who lived under Conſtantine the Great, ſays, [c] *How few are thoſe families which cultivate the liberal arts? Nothing is heard now but ſinging and fiddling. Inſtead of a philoſopher, the cuſtom is to ſend for a ſinger;*

[a] *Quam ab ſano initio res in hanc vel opulentis regnis vix tolerabilem inſaniam venerit.* Liv. hiſt. l. 7.

[b] *Malarum rerum induſtriâ invaſit animos. Cantandi ſaltandique nunc obſcæna ſtudia effœminatos tenent.* Senec. Contr. lib. 1.

[c] *Quod cum ita ſit, paucæ domus ſtudiorum ſeriis cultibus antea celebratæ, nunc ludibriis ignaviæ torrentes exundant, vocali ſono, perſtabili tinnitu fidium reſultantes. Denique pro philoſopho cantor, & in locum oratoris doctor artium ludicrarum accitur & bibliothecis ſepulchrorum ritu in perpetuum clauſis, fabricantur hydraulica, & lyræ in ſpecim carpentorum ingentes, ibique, & hiſtrionici geſtus inſtrumenta non levia.* Amm. Marcell. hiſt. lib. 14.

and inſtead of an orator, for a profeſſor of the theatrical arts. Libraries are ſhut up like tombs, and people's whole ſtudy is taken up in making hydraulics, huge lyres, various flutes, and all ſorts of inſtruments uſed in regulating the geſticulation of actors.

I muſt acquaint the reader, that in reducing the value of the Roman coin to the French ſtandard, I have not followed Budæus, tho' his calculation was right when that learned man wrote. But the ſame ſilver mark that was not worth twelve livres, current money, when Budæus publiſhed his work *De Aſſe*, [a] was worth ſixty livres when reduced to the coin that was current when this laſt eſtimation was made. [b] Thoſe who tranſlate or comment upon ancient writers, ought to be attentive to this point, as alſo to value the ſum of which the author makes mention, by the proportion between gold and ſilver, which can hardly be reckoned the ſame it was in the time of the Roman republic. Ten ounces of fine ſilver were then equivalent to an ounce of fine gold; whereas for an ounce of fine gold in France, we muſt now give very near fifteen ounces of fine ſilver. There are a great many countries in Europe where gold is ſtill dearer.

In fine, 'tis reaſonable, methinks, to judge of the progreſs a nation made in arts of which we have no monuments to found a ſolid deciſion, by the progreſs this very nation

[a] Under Francis I. [b] In 1718.

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has made in other arts of which we have some remains: Now the monuments extant of poetry, eloquence, painting, sculpture, and the architecture of the ancients, are an evident proof that they were very skilful in all these arts, and had carried them to a high degree of perfection. Since we must be determined some way or other in respect to their ability in the art of theatrical representations, why should not our opinion be in favor of their skill and success, so as to incline us to think we should give those representations, could we see them, the same commendations we bestow on their buildings, statues and writings? May we not even draw from the excellence of the poems of the ancients a presumption in favor of the merit of their actors? Have we not the very strongest reasons to believe, that those actors must have excelled in their profession? The most part of them were born slaves, and consequently subject from their infancy to make as long and as rigorous an apprenticeship as their masters thought proper. If they became eminent in their art, they were sure of acquiring liberty, riches, and the public esteem. In Greece those who excelled in the theatrical art were reputed persons of distinction, and we have even instances of ambassadors and ministers of state taken from this profession. [a] Tho' the Roman laws excluded most comedians from the free-

[a] Liv. *hist. l.* 24. August. *de Civit. l.* 2. *cap.* 11. Arnob. *adv. Gent. lib.* 7.

dom

dom of the city, the public nevertheless had a great value for them, as we shall presently demonstrate. They acted the busy body at Rome with as much impunity as the Eunuchs who sing at present in Italy.

We are informed by facts that the apprenticeship of those who were designed for the stage, and who in all probability were none but such as seemed to have a disposition for the business, was extremely tedious. Cicero tells us, [a] that tragic players used to practise whole years before they appeared upon the stage. They made even a part of their apprenticeship in declaiming seated, that they might find afterwards a greater facility when they declaimed standing upon the stage. A person accustomed to perform a thing more difficult than the ordinary exercises of his employment, goes thro' these afterwards with greater ease and grace. Now the breast is more at ease in a man standing than sitting.

Hence it was usual to exercise the gladiators [b] with heavier arms than those with which they fought. *For*, as Quintilian observes, [c] *the labor we go thro' in our apprenticeship, should be much harder than what we are to endure when we become masters of our art.*

[a] Cic. de orat. lib. 1. vid. infra.

[b] *Gladiatores grævioribus armis discunt quàm pugnant.* Sen. Cont. l. 4.

[c] *Difficiliora enim debent esse quæ exercent, quo sit levius ipsum illud in quod exercent.* Quint. lib. 11. cap. 2.

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Cicero informs[a] us, that the great actors would never ſpeak a word in the morning, before they had unfolded, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, methodically their voice; letting it looſe by degrees, that they might not hurt the organs by emitting it with precipitancy and violence. They likewiſe took care to lye a-bed during this exerciſe. After having acted, they ſat themſelves down, and in this poſture they folded again, as it were, the organs of their voice, raiſing it to the higheſt tone to which they had aſcended in declaiming, and depreſſing it afterwards ſucceſſively to all the other tones, 'till they came at length to the very loweſt. Notwithſtanding the advantages that aroſe from eloquence at Rome, and the additional ornament a fine voice was to eloquence, yet Cicero will not ſuffer an orator to make himſelf a ſlave to his voice, as was cuſtomary for the comedians. It ſeems nevertheleſs, that a little after the death of Cicero, whom Seneca the elder, by what he ſays himſelf, might have ſeen, the Roman orators gave into the moſt ſuperſtitious practices of the actors, in order to preſerve their voice. Seneca therefore making mention of Porcius Latro the orator, his ſchool-fellow, friend, and

[a] *Me autem nemo dicendi ſtudioſus Græcorum & tragœdorum more voci ſerviet, qui & annos complures ſedentes declamitant, & quotidie antequam pronuncient, vocem cubantes ſenſim excitant: eandem cùm egerint, ab acutiſſimo ſono uſque ad graviſſimum ſonum recolligunt.* CIC. de orat. lib. 1.

country-

countryman, obſerves as a very rare thing;[a] that this Porcius, who had been brought up in Spain, and was accuſtomed to a ſober and laborious life, ſuch as people at that time continued to lead in the provinces, uſed no manner of preſervative for his voice, but neglected the practice of unfolding it methodically from the higheſt to the loweſt tone, and of folding or turning it in again in the ſame manner.

Perſius ſpeaking of thoſe who prepare themſelves for public orations or recitations, ranks among the number of precautions uſed on thoſe occaſions, that of gargling the throat with a kind of compoſition made for that purpoſe.

Grande aliquid, quod pulmo animæ prælargus anhelet:
Scilicet hæc populo, pexuſque, togaque recenti,
- - - - - - - liquido cum plaſmate guttur
Mobile conlueris. PERS. ſat. 1.

All noiſe, and empty pomp, a ſtorm of words,
Lab'ring with ſound that little ſenſe affords.
They comb, and then they order ev'ry hair;
A gown, or white, or ſcour'd to whiteneſs, wear.
A birth-day jewel bobbing at their ear.

[a] *Nil vocis cauſa facere, non illam per gradus paulatim ab imo uſque ad ſummum perducere, non rurſus a ſumma contentione paribus intervallis deſcendere, non ſudorem unctione diſcutere.* SENEC. Contr. l. 1.

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Next gargle well their throats, and thus prepar'd
They mount, a God's name, to be ſeen and hear'd.
DRYDEN.

Ariſtotle ſays [a] the very ſame thing as Cicero in relation to the care which the actors, and thoſe who ſung in chorus, had to preſerve their voice. We learn alſo from Apuleius [b], that the actors declaimed every day, to the end their organs might not, in a manner, grow ruſty.

The writings of the ancients abound with facts which ſhew, that their attention in relation to whatever might ſtrengthen or improve the voice, was carried even to a degree of ſuperſtition. We find by the third chapter of the eleventh book of Quintilian's inſtitutes, that with regard to all kinds of eloquence, the ancients made a profound ſtudy of the nature of the human voice, and of all the proper methods for ſtrengthening it. The art of teaching how to ſtrengthen and manage the voice was become a particular profeſſion. Pliny points out in ſeveral parts of his hiſtory, no leſs than twenty plants, which were reckoned ſpecifics for that purpoſe. The care of preſerving the voice was become one of the moſt ſerious occupations of thoſe who ſpoke or recited in public. I ſhall cite here only the

[a] ARISTOT. Prob. l. 10.

[b] *Deſuetudo omnibus pigritiam, pigritia veternum parit. Tragœdi adeo ut quotidie proclament, claritudo arteriis obſoleſcit. Igitur identidem boando purgant ravim.* APUL. FLOR. lib. 2.

example

example of Nero, that theatrical man whom the Gods thought proper to intruſt with the government of the world. Pliny relates, [a] that this prince was the inventer of a new method of ſtrengthening the voice, which conſiſted in declaiming as loud as poſſible with a leaden plate upon his breaſt. Suetonius adds [b] ſome curious particulars to Pliny's relation. After mentioning the regimen they obſerved, and the precautions uſed in order to improve and preſerve the voice, he informs us that Nero, upon his return from Greece, was ſo extremely careful, as to make uſe of ſeveral particular drugs for this very purpoſe. And that he might ſpare his voice as much as poſſible, whenever he muſtered his troops, he declined calling each ſoldier by his name according to the cuſtom of the Romans; but ordered their names to be called over by one of thoſe domeſtics whom the Romans kept near their perſons, to ſpeak for them when there was occaſion to raiſe the voice very high in or-

[a] *Nero, quoniam ita Diis placuit, princeps, lamina pectori impoſita, ſub ea cantica exclamans alendis vocibus demonſtravit rationem.* PLIN. hiſt. lib. 39. cap. 3.

[b] *Nec eorum quidquam omittere quæ generis ejus artifices, vel conſervandæ vocis cauſa vel augendæ facilitarent. Sed & plumbeam chartam ſupinus pectore ſuſtinere & cliſtere vomituque purgari, & abſtinere pomis cibiſque officientibus. Ac poſt hæc tantum abfuit à remittendo laxandoque ſtudio, ut conſervandæ vocis gratia neque milites unquam niſi alio verba pronunciante appellaret.* SUET. in NERONE.

des

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der to be heard. Thus we find that theatrical people have been subject in all times to be led away by whimsical notions. But these very fancies of Nero and others of his stamp shew how greatly those arts were valued in which the beauty of the voice is of any advantage.

CHAP. XVI.

Of the Pantomimes, or players who acted without speaking.

THE ancients, not satisfied with reducing the Hypocritical music or the art of gesticulation into method, carried it to such a degree of perfection, that some comedians attempted to act all sorts of theatrical pieces without speaking. Whatever the Pantomimes wanted to say, they expressed with gestures taught by the art of Saltation. *Is it a reason for Venus to be appeased*, says Arnobius [a] in a work written against the pagan superstitions, *to see a Pantomime representing Adonis, by making use of such gestures as he learns from the art of dancing?* This shews that the Pantomimes made themselves commonly understood without speaking. *The stage-players*, says

[a] *Obliterabit offensam Venus, si Adonis in habitu gestum agere viderit saltatoriis in motibus Pantomimum?* ARNOB. adv. Gent. l. 7.

an ancient writer, [a] *explain and set before us an ordinary fable without the assistance of language.*

One would imagine by reading Lucian, [b] that it was customary sometimes to sing the subject executed by the Pantomimes; but 'tis also certain by several passages which I shall presently cite, that they frequently acted, when no body either sung or pronounced the verses of those scenes in which they performed their dumb shew. The name of Pantomime, which signifies an imitator of every thing, was given to those comedians, probably because they imitated and explained all sorts of subjects by gestures. We shall see presently that the Pantomime not only represented sometimes a single personage, as the other comedians; but that he also painted and described by his gesture the action of several personages. For example, if the scene of Mercury and Sosia in the comedy of Amphytrio was sometimes divided between two Pantomimes, so that one actor performed the part of Sosia, and another that of Mercury; the same actor sometimes executed two parts, by acting alternately the personage of Mercury and that of Sosia.

We have already observed that the art of gesture was composed of natural and instituted signs. We may well imagine that the Pantomimes made use of both, as they could not have

[a] *Histriones quasdam in theatro fabulas sine verbis saltando, plerumque aperiunt & exponunt.* AUG. de Magist.

[b] LUCIAN. de Orch.

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too many methods of making themſelves underſtood. All the movements therefore of a Pantomime, as St Auſtin [a] obſerves, had ſome ſignification, and all his geſtures were phraſes, as it were, to thoſe who had the key.

As the Pantomimes uſed ſeveral geſtures of an arbitrary ſignification, a perſon muſt have been at leaſt accuſtomed to ſee them, that he might loſe nothing of their meaning. In fact St Auſtin informs us, [b] that when the Pantomimes firſt began to act on the Carthaginian ſtage, they were obliged for a long while to have a public crier, to acquaint people with the ſubject they were going to repreſent in their dumb ſhew. *There are old people ſtill living*, continues this father, *who have aſſured me that they remember to have ſeen this practice. Beſides we find that thoſe who are not initiated in the myſteries of theſe ſpectacles, underſtand but very little of what the Pantomimes mean, unleſs the perſon they ſit next to, explains it to them.* But uſe and cuſtom cleared up the

[a] *Hiſtriones omnium membrorum motibus dant ſigna quædam ſcientibus, & cum oculis eorum fabulantur.* S. Aug. de doctr. Chr. lib. 2.

[b] *Primis temporibus ſaltante Pantomimo, præco pronuntiabat populis Carthaginis quod ſaltator vellet intelligi. Quod adhuc multi meminerunt ſenes quorum relatu hæc ſolemus audire. Quod ideo credendum eſt, quia nunc quoque ſi quis talium nugarum imperitus intraverit, niſi ei dicatur ab altero quid illi motus ſignificent, fruſtra intentus eſt.* S. Aug. de doctr. Chriſt. lib. 2.

meaning

meaning of this mute language to thoſe who had not made a methodical ſtudy of it, in the ſame manner as it ſhews a perſon the ſignification of the words of a ſtrange language, of which he underſtood ſome terms before; when he lives among people who ſpeak this language. One word he knows helps him to underſtand another, and ſo on. When people had a knowledge of this mute language, the geſtures they underſtood helped them to gueſs at the meaning of the new geſtures which in all probability the pantomimes invented from time to time.

A poem of Sidonius Apollinaris, intitled *Narbona*, and addreſſed to Conſentius a citizen of that place, ſhews that a great many pantomimes executed their parts without ſpeaking a word. Sidonius ſays here to his friend: "When after "having finiſhed your affairs, you went to unbend yourſelf at the theatre, the comedians "trembled at your preſence. It ſeemed as "if they were going to play before Apollo and "the nine muſes. You comprehended immediately the meaning of what Caramalus and "Phabaton repreſented without the aſſiſtance of "ſpeech, who made themſelves underſtood, as "it were, by a ſpeaking geſture, expreſſing themſelves ſometimes with a ſingle nod, ſometimes with the hand, or by ſome other motion of the body. You knew preſently whether it was Jaſon, Thyeſtes, or ſome other "perſonage they intended to repreſent."

Coram

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Coram te Caramalus aut Phabaton
Clauſit faucibus & loquente geſtu,
Nutu, crure, genu, manu, rotatu, &c. [a]

Sirmondus, in his notes upon Sidonius Apollinaris, [b] informs us that this Caramalus and Phabaton were two celebrated Pantomimes, of whom mention is made in Ariſtenætus's letters, and in Leontius. The commentator of Sidonius produces likewiſe upon this occaſion the following old epigram, the author of which is not known.

Tot linguæ quot membra viro, mirabilis eſt ars,
Quæ facit articulos, ore ſilente, loqui.

All the members of a Pantomime are ſo many tongues, by means of which he ſpeaks without opening his mouth.

'Tis eaſy to conceive how the Pantomimes could contrive to give an intelligible deſcription of an action, and to ſignify by their geſture the words taken in their proper ſenſe, as the heavens, the earth, a man, *&c.* But how was it poſſible for them (ſome will aſk) to expreſs by geſtures, words taken in a figurative ſenſe, which occur ſo frequently in the poetic ſtyle?

I ſhall anſwer in the firſt place, that the ſenſe of the phraſe conveyed ſometimes the meaning of thoſe words taken in a figurative ſenſe. Secondly, Macrobius [c] gives us an idea of the manner the

[a] SIDON Carm. 23. verſ. 268.
[b] SIRM. in not. ad SIDON. p. 157.
[c] MACROB. Saturn. 2. cap. 7.

Pantomimes

Pantomimes contrived to expreſs thoſe words. He relates that Hilas, the diſciple and competitor of Pylades, (who, as we ſhall ſee preſently, was the firſt inventer of the Pantomimic art) executed a Monologue after his manner, which ended with theſe words, *the great Agamemnon.* Hilas, to expreſs them, made all the geſtures of a man that wants to meaſure another who is bigger than himſelf. Pylades cried out from the pit, *Friend, thou makeſt thy Agamemnon a big man, but not a great man.* Upon which the people inſiſted immediately that Pylades ſhould act that very part. Auguſtus, under whoſe reign this adventure happened, would rather have the people maſters at the theatre than in the *Campus Martius.* They were therefore obeyed; and when Pylades executed the part for which he had publicly cenſured his eleve, he repreſented by his geſture and attitude the countenance of a perſon immerſed in deep meditation, to expreſs the character of a great man. It was an eaſy matter to ſee he meant by his action, that a man greater than others was he who had profounder thoughts. The emulation was ſo great between Pylades and Bathyllus another Pantomime, that Auguſtus, who found himſelf ſometimes imbarraſſed with their diſputes, thought fit to ſpeak to Pylades, and to adviſe him to live in harmony and friendſhip with his rival whom Mecænas protected. Pylades anſwered, that the beſt thing that could happen to him, was to ſee the

people

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people so busy in relation to Pylades and Bathyllus. 'Tis very probable the emperor did not chuse to reply to this answer.

Let us now mention something concerning the persons of the Pantomimes. The author of the treatise against the ancient spectacles, which is to be seen among the works of St Cyprian, defines a Pantomime, [a] *a monster that is neither man nor woman, whose carriage and manners are more lascivious than those of any courtezan, and whose art consists in speaking with his gesture. And yet all the town,* he says, *runs to see him represent by his gesticulations, the infamous obscenities of fabulous antiquity.* The Romans must have taken it into their heads, that the castration of their Pantomimes preserved a suppleness in their bodies superior to that of other men. This notion or capricious whim made them exercise the same cruelty on their children whom they designed for this profession, as is practised in some countries on young people to prevent their voice (if I may so express myself) from mewing. St Cyprian, in a letter he wrote to Donatus giving an account of the motives of his conversion to the Christian religion, says, [b] that the public shows which constitute a part of the pagan worship, are full of infamy and barbarity. After mentioning the horrors of the amphitheatre he says of the Pantomimes, that the males are degraded of their sex, to render them fitter for practising so dishonest a trade, and that the master who knows best how to soften a man into a woman is said to make the best disciple. *What pain,* says Tertullian, [a] *and torture of body is not a Pantomime obliged to endure, in order to be fit for his profession?*

In effect Lucian observes, [b] that nothing was more difficult than to find a proper person to make a Pantomime. After speaking of his size, suppleness, activity and air, he adds, that 'tis as easy to find a countenance both soft and majestic at the same time. He says afterwards, that this actor must be taught music, history, and several other things proper for a man of letters.

We read in Zozimus and Suidas, [c] that the Pantomimic art had its rise at Rome under the emperor Augustus; which made Lucian say that Socrates [d] had seen the art of *dancing* when it was but just in its cradle. Zozimus reckons even the invention of this art among the causes of the corrupt manners of

[a] *Huic dedecori condignum dedecus superinducitur, bono fractus omnibus membris, & vir ultra muliebrem mollitiem dissolutus, cui ars est verba manibus expedire; & propter unum nescio quem nec virum nec fœminam, commovetur civitas, ut desaltentur fabulosæ antiquitatis libidines.*

[b] *Eviraatur mares, omnis honor & vigor sexûs enervati corporis dedecore emollitur, plusque illi placet quisquis virum in fœminam magis fregerit.* S. CYP. ep. ad DONAT.

[a] TERTUL. contra Spectac.
[b] LUCIAN de Orchesi.
[c] Zoz. hist. lib. 1.
[d] LUCIAN de Orchesi.

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the Roman people, and of the misfortunes of the empire. In fact, the Romans, as we ſhall ſee preſently, grew extravagantly fond of this ſpectacle.

The two firſt inventers of this new art were Pylades and Bathyllus, who have rendered their names as famous in the Roman hiſtory, as that of the founder of any inſtitution among the moderns. Pylades borrowed his geſticulation from the three collections already ſpoken of, which were uſed in tragedy, comedy, and the dramatic poem diſtinguiſhed by the name of Satyre. As for the proper geſticulation of the Pantomimes, he gave it the appellation of *Italica*. Thus after Pylades there were four collections of theatrical geſtures: The *Emmelia* uſed in tragedy; the *Cordax* in comedy; the *Sicinnis* in ſatyre; and the *Italica* in pieces executed by Pantomimes. M. Calliachy a native of Candia, who died about the year 1708, profeſſor of Belles Lettres in the univerſity of Padua, [a] pretends that the Pantomimic art was more ancient than Auguſtus. But he produces no ſolid proof of his opinion; for he miſtakes the arbitrary art of expreſſing a few paſſions, an art which Livy calls [b] *imitandorum carminum actum*, and was certainly older than Auguſtus; he miſtakes it, I ſay, for the Panto-

[a] De ludis ſcen. cap. 9, & 10.
[b] TIT. LIV. lib. 7.

mimic art, which conſiſted in reciting a whole play or a ſcene without ſpeaking. We ſhall produce hereafter a paſſage of Seneca the elder, who might have ſeen Pylades and Bathyllus, where he ſays that Pylades ſurpaſſed Bathyllus in tragic ſubjects; but that in comic ones Bathyllus's action was much ſuperior to that of Pylades. Athenæus gives us the ſame idea of theſe two Pantomimes; and we find the ſame remark in a great number of ancient writers.

To ſignify that the Pantomimes acted a piece, it was uſual to ſay, *they danced it*, *fabulam ſaltabant*; the reaſons of which we have already given. In theſe repreſentations they made uſe of flutes of a particular kind, which were called *Tibiæ Dactilicæ*. [a] Very likely the ſound of this flute made a better imitation of the human voice, after the manner it is imitated by the German flute. It was fitter for playing the ſubject; that is, in my opinion, the noted modulation of the verſes, or the declamation which was to be recited in ordinary repreſentations. For we find by a paſſage of Caſſiodorus [b] already cited, that the flute called *Dactilica* was accompanied by other inſtruments which probably ſerved for a thorough baſs to the modulation.

What ſeems very ſurprizing, is, that thoſe comedians who undertook to play without

[a] ONOM. POLL. lib. 4. cap. 10.
[b] CASSIODORUS, ep. 51. l. 4.

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ſpeaking, could not make uſe of the motions of the face in their declamation. They had expreſſion enough, and to ſpare; and yet 'tis certain they played with maſks, in the ſame manner as the other comedians. Lucian ſays in his treatiſe of dancing, that the Pantomimic maſk had not a wide mouth, like thoſe of common comedians, but was much handſomer. Macrobius relates, [a] that Pylades was vexed one day when he was acting the character of *Hercules Furens*, becauſe the ſpectators complained that his geſticulation was extravagant. Upon which he took off his maſk, and cried out to them, *Don't you know, ye fools, that I am acting the part of a greater fool than your ſelves?* This very author gives us in the ſame paſſage ſeveral other ingenious ſallies of that celebrated founder of the Pantomimes.

Very likely, theſe comedians began firſt with executing after their way, thoſe ſcenes of tragedy and comedy, that were called *Cantica*. I ground this conjecture on two reaſons. The firſt is, that the ancient writers, who lived before Apuleius, make no mention, as far as I can remember, of dramatic pieces executed by a company of Pantomimes. They take notice only of monologues or cantics *danced* by thoſe dumb comedians. We find even in the abovementioned work of Lucian, that a ſtranger ſeeing five habits prepared for the ſame Pantomime, who was

[a] MACROB. SATURN. lib. 2. cap. 7.

to act ſucceſſively five different parts, aſked whether the ſame perſon was to wear them all five. There would have been no room, methinks, to aſk this queſtion, if there had been companies of Pantomimes at that time. My ſecond reaſon is, that in all probability the thing muſt have happened in the following manner. No doubt the firſt Pantomimes endeavoured to make themſelves underſtood, in order to be agreable to the ſpectators; for which reaſon they muſt have begun with executing the moſt entertaining ſcenes of the principal dramatic pieces, as theſe were likely to be eaſieſt underſtood. If a company of Pantomimes were to be formed at Paris, 'tis to be ſuppoſed they would ſet out with the fineſt ſcenes of the Cid and other celebrated pieces, by chuſing thoſe in which the action requires the comedian to put himſelf in many ſingular attitudes, and to perform ſeveral remarkable geſticulations, ſuch as may be eaſily diſtinguiſhed when ſeen, without hearing the diſcourſe which they naturally accompany. They would begin, for example, with repreſenting the ſcene between Mercury and Soſia in the firſt act of Amphytrion. Were they to execute any part of our operas, they would ſet out with the laſt ſcene of the fourth act of Rowland, where this hero grows mad.

Perhaps it was in Lucian's time that intire companies of Pantomimes were firſt formed, and began to act regular pieces. Apuleius, who might have ſeen Lucian, gives us a very exact

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account of the repreſentation of the judgment of Paris, performed by a company of Pantomimes. We ſee in this curious recital [a] that Juno, Pallas, and Venus ſpoke one after another to Paris, and promiſed him what every body knows, explaining themſelves with geſticulations and ſigns accompanied with inſtruments. Apuleius remarks ſeveral times that they made themſelves underſtood by geſticulations, *nutibus*, or *geſtibus*. Each Goddeſs had alſo her particular retinue which conſiſted of ſeveral actors.

As the Pantomimes were excuſed from ſpeaking, and their whole buſineſs was to geſticulate; 'tis plain their geſticulation muſt have been livelier, and their action much more animated than that of the ordinary comedians. The latter could give only a part of their attention and force to the geſticulation in the dialogues, becauſe they ſpoke themſelves; and in the monologues where they were ſilent, they were obliged to make their

[a] *Hæc puella* (Juno) *varios modulos concinente tibia, præ cæteris quietâ & inaffectatâ geſticulatione, nutibus honeſtis paſtori pollicetur, ſi ſibi præmium decoris addixiſſet, & ſeſe regnum totius Aſiæ tributuram. Hæc* (Minerva) *inquieto capite & oculis in aſpectum minacibus citato & intorto genere geſticulationis alacer, demonſtrabat Paridi, ſi ſibi formæ victoriam tradidiſſet, fortem trophæiſque bellicis inclytum ſuis adminiculis futurum.* (Venus) *ſenſim annutante capite cæpit incedere, molliqua tibiarum ſono delicatis reſpondere geſtibus & nonnunquam ſaltare ſolis oculis. Hæc ut primum ante conſpectum judicis facta eſt, niſu brachiorum polliceri videbatur*, &c. APUL. Mot. l. 10.

dumb

dumb ſhew agree with the recitation of the perſon who ſpoke in their ſtead. On the contrary, the Pantomime was intire maſter of his action, and his only care was to render his expreſſion intelligible. Wherefore Caſſiodorus, after ſpeaking of the tragedies and comedies that were repreſented on the ſtage, [a] calls the Pantomimes, *men whoſe eloquent hands had a tongue, as it were, on the tip of each finger: Men who ſpoke while they were ſilent, and who knew how to make an intire recital without opening their mouths: Men, in fine, whom Polyhymnia, the Muſe who preſided over muſic, had formed, in order to ſhew, that there was no neceſſity for articulating in order to convey our thoughts.* 'Tis thus this author explains himſelf in a letter written in the name of Theodoric king of the Oſtrogoths, to Symmachus governor of Rome, deſiring him to repair the theatre of Pompey at that prince's expence.

If we can give credit to Martial and ſome other poets, the Pantomimes made a prodigious impreſſion on the ſpectators. Every body knows theſe verſes of Juvenal.

Chironomum Ledam molli ſaltante Bathyllo
Tuccia, &c.

[a] *Orcheſtarum loquaciſſimæ manus, linguoſi digiti, ſilentium clamoſum, expoſitio tacita, quem Muſa Polyhymnia reperiſſe narratur, oſtendens homines poſſe ſine oris afflatu velle ſuum declarare.* CASSIOD. var. ep. lib. 4. ep. 51.

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But moſt of theſe paſſages are ſuch as decency will not permit us to cite even in Latin. Beſides, poets are ſuſpected of exaggeration; we ſhall therefore be ſatisfied with quoting proſe writers.

Seneca the elder, who followed one of the graveſt profeſſions of his time, confeſſes that his taſte for Pantomimic repreſentations was a real paſſion. *And to come to my folly*, ſays this philoſopher [a] ſpeaking of the difficulty there is to ſucceed in ſeveral profeſſions, *Pylades was no more the ſame actor in comedy, nor Bathyllus in tragedy.* Lucian ſays, that the ſpectators wept at the repreſentations of the Pantomimes, in the ſame manner as at thoſe of other comedians.

The Pantomimic art would find a greater difficulty to ſucceed among the northern nations of Europe, whoſe natural action is neither eloquent, nor diſtinct enough to be eaſily underſtood, when we ſee it without hearing the diſcourſe it ſhould naturally accompany. The copy is always leſs animated than the original. But I have already obſerved that converſations of all kinds are fuller of external ſigns, and more ſpeaking, as it were, to the eye, in Italy than in our country. When a Roman thinks proper to quit the ſtudied gravity of his carriage, and gives way for a while to his natural vivacity, he abounds in geſticulations and ſigns, that have as expreſſive

[a] *Et ut ad morbum ſe meum vocem, Pylades in comœdia, Bathyllus in tragœdia multùm à ſe aberant.* SENEC. in controv. 2.

a ſig-

a ſignification as intire phraſes. His action renders many things intelligible of which ours could not give the leaſt conjecture or idea; and his geſticulations are ſo expreſſive and diſtinct, that 'tis very eaſy to know them when we ſee them again. A Roman who has a mind to ſpeak to his friend of ſome ſecret and important affair, is not ſatisfied with getting out of the way of being heard; he has even the precaution to avoid being ſeen, from a very juſt apprehenſion that his geſticulations and the motions of his face would give ſome conjectural notion of what he is going to ſay.

'Tis obſervable that the ſame vivacity of ſpirit and fire of imagination, which by a natural motion throws people into thoſe animated, varied, expreſſive, and characteriſed geſticulations, gives them a facility to underſtand the geſtures and external ſigns of others: For 'tis very natural for us to comprehend a language we ſpeak. But the language of the Grand Signor's mutes, which is ſo eaſily underſtood by their countrymen, as to ſeem an articulate language, would appear like a confuſed buzzing to the inhabitants of the North of Europe. Let us add to theſe remarks a very common reflexion, which is, that there are ſome nations who have a greater ſenſibility in their natural diſpoſition than others; and we ſhall find it no ſuch difficult matter to believe that the dumb comedians made a very ſenſible impreſſion on the Greeks and Romans, whoſe natural action they imitated.

I ſhall

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I ſhall alledge as a kind of proof of what I have now advanced, a book written by an Italian author, Giovani Bonifacio, and intitled, *L'arte de' cenni*, or the art of expreſſing ourſelves by ſigns. We do not find in reading this work, that the author knew that the ancient Pantomimes made themſelves underſtood without ſpeaking; and yet he thought the thing poſſible. This ſet him upon compoſing a volume *in quarto* of upwards of ſix hundred pages, divided into two parts. In the firſt he teaches the method of expreſſing one's thoughts by ſigns and geſtures; and in the ſecond, he ſhews the utility of this dumb language. This book was printed at Vicenza in 1616.[a] But 'tis time to return to the ancient authors who ſpeak of the ſucceſs the Pantomimes met with in their repreſentations.

Lucian[b] declares himſelf a zealous partiſan of theſe dumb comedians, and we find he took a pleaſure in relating ſuch facts as might be an honor to their profeſſion. Among other things he ſays that a Cynic philoſopher treated their art as a childiſh amuſement, and defined it a collection of geſticulations which the muſic and decorations rendered barely tolerable. But a Pantomime of Nero's court, willing to ſhew this philoſopher he was in the wrong, executed before him the amours of Mars and Venus in a dumb declamation and without any inſtruments to accompany him. Upon which the Cynic

[a] By GROSSI. [b] LUCIAN. in Orcheſi.

nic was obliged to acknowledge theſe comedians to be maſters of a real art. The ſame author relates, that a king, whoſe dominions bordered upon the Euxine ſea, happening to be at Rome under the reign of Nero, begged of that prince very earneſtly to let him have a Pantomime he had ſeen act, that he might make him his general interpreter in all languages. *This fellow*, ſaid he, *will make all the world underſtand him, whereas I am obliged to have I don't know how many interpreters, in order to keep up a correſpondence with my neighbours, who ſpeak a great many different languages which I do not underſtand.*

As we have not ſeen any of the repreſentations of the Pantomimes, we are as little capable of deciding of the merit of their art, as of the merit of dividing the declamation between two actors. Thoſe however who are diverted with ſeeing the Italian comedy, and eſpecially who have ſeen old Octavius, Scaramouche, and their companions Harlequin and Trivelin, ſeem to be convinced that ſeveral ſcenes may be executed very well without ſpeaking. But we can alledge facts which will evince better than all our argumentations the poſſibility of this execution. There have been companies of Pantomimes raiſed in England; and ſome of thoſe comedians have acted even at Paris dumb ſcenes which every body underſtood. Tho' Roger did not open his mouth, yet it was eaſy to underſtand what he meant. What was Roger's prentice-

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ſhip in compariſon to that of the ancient Pantomimes? Did he even ſo much as know that there had been a Pylades and a Bathyllus?

'Tis now twenty years ſince a princeſs, remarkable for her great talents, learning, and taſte for the public ſpectacles, had a mind to ſee an eſſay of the art of the ancient Pantomimes, in order to acquire a clearer idea of their repreſentations than that which ſhe had conceived by reading. For want of actors practiſed in this art, ſhe pitched upon a man, and a woman dancer, both of a ſuperior genius in their profeſſion, and in ſhort, extremely capable of inventing. They were deſired therefore to repreſent only with geſticulations at the theatre *de Sceaux*, the ſcene of the fourth act of the Horatii of Corneille, in which the young Horatius kills his ſiſter Camilla. Accordingly they executed it, accompanied with ſeveral inſtruments which played a piece of muſic, compoſed by a very able maſter[a], and adapted to the words of this ſcene. Our two new Pantomimes animated one another to ſuch a degree by their geſticulations and movements, that at length they ſhed tears; and we may eaſily ſuppoſe what impreſſion they made upon the ſpectators. We know alſo that the Chineſe have comedians who, like the Pantomimes, act without ſpeaking; and that they are paſſionately fond of them. What are the Perſian dances but Pantomimic ſcenes?

[a] M. MOURET.

'Tis

'Tis however certain, that this art charmed the Romans from its firſt origin, that it ſoon ſpread to the very remoteſt provinces, and ſubſiſted as long as that illuſtrious empire. The hiſtory of the Roman emperors makes mention oftener of famous Pantomimes than of celebrated comedians. The Romans were paſſionately fond of ſpectacles, as appears from the treatiſe of muſic among the works of Plutarch; *Thoſe*, ſays he, *who apply themſelves to muſic, prefer that of the theatre for pleaſing:* and of all ſpectacles they liked the Pantomimic repreſentations the beſt.

We have ſeen that this art had its riſe under Auguſtus: this prince was vaſtly delighted with it, and Mæcenas was quite inchanted with Bathyllus. In the very commencement of the reign of Tiberius, the ſenate was obliged to publiſh an order [a] forbidding the ſenators to frequent the ſchools of Pantomimes, and the Roman Knights to wait upon them thro' the ſtreets. This ordinance was not made without neceſſity.

Some years after they were obliged to baniſh theſe dumb players from Rome. [b] The violent paſſion the people had for theſe repreſentations, gave riſe to parties and cabals in favor of different Pantomimes, and theſe cabals turned into factions. We even find by a letter of Caſſiodorus, [c] that

[a] *Ne domos Pantomimorum ſenator introiret, ne, egredientes in publicum equites Romani cingerent.* TAC. ann. lib. 1.

[b] Id. ibid. l. 1.

[c] CASSIOD. *var. ep. lib.* 1. *ep.* 20.

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these comedians took different liveries, in imitation of the charioteers in the Circensian shows. Some wore blue; others green, &c. The people therefore were divided on their account, and all the factions of the Circus, so frequently mentioned in the Roman history, espoused the companies of Pantomimes. These factions were sometimes as violently animated against one another, as the Guelphs and Gibellines under the emperors of Germany. They were obliged at length to banish them from Rome; a melancholy but necessary expedient for a government, which studied nothing but to amuse the people, by supplying them with bread, and entertaining them with spectacles.

Seneca, the preceptor of Nero, complains, that several philosophical schools were abolished and that the very names of their founders were forgotten; while the memory of none of the celebrated Pantomimes was extinguished. *The schools*, says he, [b] *of Pylades and Bathyllus subsist under the direction of their eleves, whose succession has not been yet interrupted. The city of Rome swarms with professors of this art, who are never in want of disciples. They find theatres in every house; and the husband and wife dispute who shall be most subject to them.*

[b] *At quanta cum cura laboratur ne alicujus Pantomimi nomen intercidat. Stant per successores Pyladis & Bathylli domus. Harum artium multi discipuli sunt, multique doctores. Privatim urbe tota sonat pulpitum. Mares uxoresque contendunt, uter det latus illi.* SENEC. nat quæst. l. 7. cap. 32.

The affected ambiguity which appears in the last words of this passage in the original, is removed by what Tertullian [a] observes concerning the boundless passion both men and women had in those days for the Pantomimes. To this we may add what Galen says in his prognostics; that being sent for to a woman of quality who was seized with an extraordinary kind of distemper, he discovered by the alterations that appeared in the Lady's countenance whenever the name of a certain Pantomime happened to be mentioned in her presence, that her sickness was intirely owing to the passion she had conceived for him, and the violent efforts she used to conceal it.

The Pantomimes were likewise expelled the city of Rome under Nero and other emperors; but their exile, as we have already observed, did not last long, because the people could not do without them; and besides there happened some conjunctures in which the prince thinking he stood in need of the favor of the multitude, endeavored by popular actions to conciliate their affection. For example, they had been banished by Domitian; and yet Nerva his successor recalled them, tho' he was one of

[a] *Quibus viri animas, fœminæ aut illi etiam corpora sua substernunt.* TERTUL. de spectac.

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the ſobereſt and wiſeſt of princes. We find likewiſe by a letter of Pliny to Trajan, [a] that the people themſelves grown tired with the diſorders occaſioned by the Pantomimes, petitioned ſometimes for their expulſion as eagerly as at other times they inſiſted upon their return.

Some modern writers ſuppoſe, that Nero expelled all ſorts of players out of Rome, becauſe Tacitus, relating the expulſion of the Pantomimes, makes uſe of a general expreſſion applicable to all thoſe who acted upon the ſtage. *He baniſhed all the* HISTRIONES, ſays Tacitus, [b] *out of Italy; being the only method to prevent the tumults which aroſe at the theatre.* But we can prove, that none but the Pantomimes were expelled at that time, and that Tacitus, thro' a negligence excuſable on ſuch an occaſion, has put the name of the genus inſtead of the ſpecies. My firſt argument is, that Tacitus immediately after the word above cited, adds a circumſtance which ſhews that Nero did not ſhut up the theatres. He ordered, ſays this hiſtorian, [c] that for the future the ſoldiers ſhould mount guard at the play-houſe, purſuant to the ancient cuſtom. Here 'tis to be obſerved that Nero had removed this guard

[a] *Neque à te minore concentu ut tolleres Pantomimos, quàm à patre tuo ut reſtitueret exactum eſt.* PLIN. ep. ad TRAJ.

[b] *Non aliud remedium repertum eſt, quàm ut hiſtriones Italia pellerentur.* TAC. Annal. lib. 13.

[c] *Mileſque theatro rurſum aſſideret.* Id. ib.

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for ſome time, in order to appear more popular. The ſecond is, that the ſame writer mentioning the return of theſe *Hiſtriones*, whoſe expulſion he before related, gives them the name of Pantomimes. [b]

CHAP. XVII.

At what time the ſumptuous repreſentations of the ancients ceaſed. Of the excellence of their muſic.

THE Pantomimic art, as well as that of comedians who executed the declamation in two parts, and that of the compoſers of declamation; in a word, ſeveral of the ſubordinate arts to the ſcience of muſic, periſhed in all probability, when the ſumptuous repreſentations, which had given riſe to the greateſt part of the muſical arts, and ſupported thoſe who profeſſed them, were dropt at the theatre of Marcellus, and at ſeveral other great theatres capable of holding many thouſands of ſpectators. But at what time preciſely thoſe magnificent theatres were abandoned, whoſe immenſe bulk was the occaſion of introducing ſo many ingenious inventions in the repreſentation of dramatic pieces;

[a] *Redditi quanquam ſcenæ Pantomimi certaminibus ſacris prohibebantur.* Id. lib. 14.

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is a question which we shall endeavour here to determine.

We find in St Austin's works, who died in the year 413, that as early as his time they began to shut up the theatres in most of the cities of the Roman empire. The inundation of barbarous nations who spread themselves throughout the empire, deprived the inhabitants of the ravaged provinces of the necessary supplies for supporting the expence of those spectacles. *Unless*, says this father [a], in relation to the situation of the empire in his days, *the badness of the times is owing to the shutting up of the theatres.* But it appears on the other hand by several letters of Cassiodorus, which have been already quoted and were written about the year 520, that the theatres were open at Rome an intire century after the time mentioned by St Austin. Either the great theatres of this capital had not been shut, or else they must have been opened again. 'Tis highly probable therefore the theatrical entertainments were not intirely dropt, 'till Rome was taken and plundered by Totila [b]. This sacking of that city, which surpassed in its circumstances all the preceding ones in cruelty, and obliged Patrician ladies to beg before their own doors, occupied by barbarian masters, is the real epoch of the almost total extinction of learning and arts. The great artists indeed had disappeared

[a] *Nisi fortè hinc sint tempora mala, quia per omnes civitates cadunt theatra.* Aug. de civ. Dei. lib. 1. cap. 33.

[b] In 546.

before this, but it was not 'till now that the arts themselves disappeared. All the new disasters which followed the sacking of Rome by Totila, dried, as it were, those plants, which he had plucked up by the root.

Such was the fate of the ancient theatres in the western empire. Those men who are born more industrious than laborious, and who chuse to subsist by an easy occupation, being incapable to live any longer on the profits of the stage, either perished with hunger, or took up with some other employment; and persons of the same turn of mind who succeeded them, exercised their abilities in other professions.

I shall break in here for a few lines upon the thread of my discourse, to explain in what sense I said, that the theatres, in all probability, were shut up at Rome, when this city was pillaged by Totila. I meant only that the theatre of Marcellus and the other magnificent theatres were destroyed, or rendered unserviceable by the damage they had sustained, and that the sumptuous representations of those places dropped; but I did not pretend to say, that all representations of comedies ceased. On the contrary, I am of opinion, that as soon as the serenity of the times was a little restored, they began to act theatrical pieces, but without the ancient decorations, at Rome, and in the other great cities, which had shared the same fate as this capital of the empire. By a common revolution of human affairs, the Scenic decorations that were so sumptuous in the twelfth

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century of the foundation of Rome, were become in the thirteenth of the same æra, as plain and as simple as in the commencement of the fifth. The stage reverted therefore to its primitive simplicity under Livius Andronicus.

We have a very strong proof in the Capitularies of our kings of the second race, to shew that in their times there were profest comedians who represented theatrical pieces. This is, their renewing the law of the Theodosian Code, which forbids all kind of profaneness upon the stage. *We condemn,* say the Capitularies,* *to a bodily punishment and to banishment, all those comedians, who shall presume to appear on the stage, dressed in the habit of priests, and religious men or women, or of any ecclesiastical person.*

Comedians should at all times, of their own accord, avoid falling into any profaheneſs and immorality of this nature. Yet our Charles IX was also obliged to forbid it by an edict published in 1561, upon the complaints and representations of the states of the kingdom assembled at Orleans. The twenty fourth article of this edict says: *We strictly forbid all players of farces, mountebanks, and such-like persons, to play on Sundays and festivals during the time of Divine service, to appear*

* *Si quis ex scenicis vestem sacerdotalem aut monasticam, vel mulieris religiosæ, vel qualicunque ecclesiastico statu similem indutus fuerit, corporali pœnæ subjiciat, & exilio tradatur.* BULUS. capitul. tom. 1. p. 996.

dressed in ecclesiastic habits, or to act immoral and dissolute pieces, under penalty of imprisonment and bodily punishment. What shews that this law was not exactly observed, is, that it was renewed by an edict, which Henry III published upon the remonstrances of the states assembled at Blois in 1576. One would hardly believe that those wise and salutary laws were not put in practice. I shall give the reader an extract relating to this subject from a book intitled, *Most humble remonstrances to Henry III of that name, King of France and of Poland,* printed in the year 1588, at the convocation of the states commonly called, *the second assembly of the states at Blois,* because they met a second time in this city.

There is another great evil committed and tolerated principally in your city of Paris on Sundays and festivals, which is more prejudicial than any other to the honor of God and the sanctification of his feasts, and so pregnant with horrid abuses, that we, in conjunction with the sagest of your realm, think it sufficient to draw God's malediction on you and your kingdom, especially on the said city of Paris, where this wickedness prevails more than in any other part. This is the representing of plays and public spectacles on Sundays and festivals, by Italians as well as Frenchmen; especially those that are acted in a sewer and house of Satan called the HOTEL DE BOURGOGNE, *by such as very improperly call themselves fellow-members of the passion of Jesus Christ. In this place they make a thousand scandalous appointments to the*

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prejudice of the honor and chaſtity of women, and to the ruin of poor tradeſmen's families, who fill the lower hall, and for upwards of two hours before the play begins ſpend their time in unchaſt diſcourſes, in playing at dice, and in public gluttony and drunkenneſs, from whence ſeveral quarrels and bruiſings ariſe. On the ſcaffold they raiſe altars decked with croſſes and eccleſiaſtic ornaments; and exhibit prieſts dreſſed in ſurplices, even in immodeſt farces, in order to perform ridiculous marriages. They read the Goſpel in an eccleſiaſtic tone, to find occaſionally ſome word to ſport with; and beſides there is not one of their farces, but what is filthy, and obſcene, to the great ſcandal of the youth that go to ſee them. But this is digreſſing too far from our ſubject, let us return to the theatres which ſubſiſted at Rome, before it was laid waſte by the Barbarians.

We find by a paſſage of Ammianus Marcellinus, that the number of perſons ſupported at Rome in his time by the theatrical arts, was prodigious. This hiſtorian relates [a] with indignation, "That Rome being menaced with a fa-
"mine, they had the precaution to turn out

[a] *Poſtremò ad id indignitatis eſt ventum, ut cum peregrini ob formidatam nuper inopiam alimentorum impiam pellerentur ab urbe præcipites; ſectatoribus diſciplinarum liberalium impendio, paucis ſine reſpiratione ulla extruſis, tenerentur mimarum aſſeclæ vel, quique id ſimularunt ad tempus, & iria millia ſaltatricum ne interpellata quidem, cum choris totidemque remanerent magiſtris.* AMM. MARCELL. hiſt. lib. 14.

"all ſtrangers, even thoſe who profeſſed the "liberal arts. But while they expelled the "learned, as uſeleſs mouths, and even allowed "them but a very ſhort time to quit the city; "there was not a word ſaid to theatrical perſons, "or to thoſe who ſheltered themſelves under "this glorious title. They permitted therefore "three thouſand *women-dancers* to remain very "quietly in Rome, and as many more men who "acted in the chorus's, or were profeſſors of the "muſical arts." We may judge by this recital what a ſurprizing number of theatrical people there muſt have been at Rome under Dioclesian and Conſtantine the Great. Since there was ſo great a number of perſons who profeſſed the muſical arts, no wonder the ancients had ſo many methods and practices relating to the ſcience of Muſic, which we have not. 'Tis the multitude of artiſts who profeſs a particular art, that gives it an extent, and is the cauſe of its being ſubdivided into ſeveral ſubordinate branches.

The ſcience of muſic indeed ſubſiſted after the theatres were ſhut, but moſt of the muſical arts intirely periſhed. I do not even know that we have any one monument left of the Rhythmical, Organical, Hypocritical, or Metrical Muſic. We find the rules of the Poetic Muſic in the verſes of the ancients, and ſome of their Melopœiæ, methinks, have been preſerved in the chant uſed in Divine ſervice.

Among the anſwers to ſome queſtions of the Chriſtians, a work attributed to Juſtin martyr,

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who lived in the second century, we meet with one which decides [a] that the faithful may use in singing the praises of God, the airs composed by Pagans for profane uses, provided this music be executed with proper modesty and decorum. This passage is explained by what St Austin says in a discourse on the anniversary of St Cyprian's martyrdom. *'Tis not long ago*, says he, [b] *since* DANCERS *presumed to practise their art in this venerable place, even over the tomb of our sacred martyr. They sung profane songs here all night long, while others declaimed with gesticulations.* The circumstances of time and place shew plainly that this passage must be understood of Christians. 'Tis therefore very probable that some Christian had wrote St Cyprian's passion in verse, and that this poem was executed over his tomb in the same manner as profane pieces were acted at the theatre. It follows therefore that when Justin allows the airs composed by pagans to be sung in churches, he is not for having them declaimed, but only for their being sung without any gesticulation.

Be this as it will, the church office contains several hymns composed before the sacking of Rome by Totila. Hymns were made for singing, pur-

[a] QUÆST. 107.

[b] *Aliquando ante annos non valde multos etiam istum locum invaserat petulantia saltatorum, istum tam sanctum locum ubi jacet tam sancti martyris corpus. Per totam noctem canebantur hic nefaria & canentibus saltabatur.* AUG. serm. 311. in natali D. CYPRIANI.

suant to the saying of Isidorus [c] *If it is not sung, 'tis not a hymn.* Now as the music of these hymns is the same in all the offices, 'tis reasonable to imagine this music was composed when first the hymns were made. Let us proceed with this subject.

The Ambrosian office which is still sung in several churches, was composed or regulated by this saint, who died a hundred and fifty years before the pillaging of Rome by Totila. When this event happened, St Gregory the Great, the same who composed or regulated the Gregorean office or song, which still obtains in a great number of Catholic churches, was already born. These saints did not create a new music for their offices when they reduced them to a proper regulation: for it appears by the manner in which cotemporary writers explain themselves concerning this subject, that they admire several songs in the church, which had been made use of for some time. But all these songs, whether composed before St Gregory, or made in his time, are capable of giving us an idea of the excellence of the ancient music. If the profane songs composed within fourscore years should happen to be lost a thousand years hence, and the ecclesiastic songs made within the very same time, should be preserved, would it not be possible then to form an idea of the beauty of our profane songs from that of our church music?

[c] *Si non cantatur, non est hymnus.* ISID.

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Tho' the character of these songs be different, do we not discover the author of the Armida in Lulli's *Dies Iræ*? Certain it is, that all connoisseurs admire the beauty of the *Preface*, and several other songs of the Gregorean office, tho', as we have already observed in the beginning of this third part, it does not deviate so much from natural declamation, as our musical singing.

I return now to what has been the cause of so many discussions, I mean the practice which formerly obtained of composing and writing the declamation with notes.

CHAP. XVIII.

Reflections on the advantages and inconveniences arising from the composed declamation of the ancients.

TWO reasons determine me to believe that the practice here in question was attended with more advantage than inconvenience, and that experience made the ancients prefer the composed to the arbitrary declamation. First the ancient practice prevented the players from falling into those wrong constructions or meanings, which men of the very best abilities are apt sometimes to give to verses they recite without thoroughly understanding them. Secondly, a skilful composer of declamation oftentimes suggested expressions and beauties

beauties to comedians, which they were incapable to find of themselves. They were not all so *learned* as Roscius, the epithet bestowed upon him by Horace.

'Tis known with what success Chanmeslé recited the part of Phædra, the declamation of which she had learnt verse by verse from Racine. Boileau thought proper to take notice of it, and even our stage has preserved some vestiges or remains of this declamation which might be committed to writing, had we but proper characters; so true it is, that a good thing shews itself without difficulty in such productions as we can judge of by sense, and is not forgotten, though we never think of committing it to memory.

In fine, were a tragedy to have its declamation written in notes, it would have the same merit as an opera; that is, very indifferent actors might execute it tolerably. They could not commit the tenth part of the faults they are liable to, either in mistaking the tones, and consequently the action suitable to the verses they recite, or in affecting the pathetic in several parts that will not admit of it. This is what happens every day on our modern stages, where the comedians (some of whom have not even studied their art) compose an arbitrary declamation of their part, without so much as understanding several of the verses.

Secondly, were every player as capable of composing the declamation of a tragedy, as a master of the art, it would be still true that the declamation

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declamation compoſed from one end of the play to the other by the ſame perſon, muſt be better managed and conducted than a declamation in which each actor recites his part according to his own fancy. This arbitrary declamation would have frequently thrown Roſcius out of meaſure. By a much ſtronger reaſon it muſt diſconcert ſome of our comedians, who for want of having ſtudied the diverſity, intervals, and (if I may ſay ſo) the ſympathy of tones, know not how to get rid of the perplexity in which they are involved thro' a diſagreement in their parts. Now it is as eaſy to make a concert of different parts that are to be alternately recited, by reducing the declamation into writing, as it is difficult to reduce it, when it has not been marked on paper.

Thus we ſee that our players, great numbers of whom have no other guides but rote and inſtinct, know not how to extricate themſelves, when the actor who recites with them, does not conclude with ſuch a tone, as may permit them to begin with the very tone for which they are prepared as much by habit as reflection. Hence it is that they charge one another ſo frequently with reciting in vicious tones, and principally with finiſhing their *couplets* wrong, ſo as to perplex, ſay they, the perſon who is to ſpeak when they have done. Theſe inconveniences did not happen when the declamation was noted, or at leaſt they could never happen but as they do at the opera, when an actor does not ſing true. That is to ſay, the fault was owing to the artiſt and not to the art,

art, which had ſufficiently provided againſt this inconveniency.

The ſpectators and actors of our times are ſo much the more to be pitied, as the former are as ſenſibly affected with the faults of the latter, as if the art of declamation exiſted ſtill the ſame it was formerly in the time of Quintilian; tho' the actors can no longer receive any benefit or aſſiſtance from this art, which is utterly loſt.

Arts are nothing more than methods regulated by certain principles; and upon examining theſe principles we find them to be maxims formed in conſequence of many obſervations made on the effects of nature. Now nature produces conſtantly its effects, purſuant to the rules preſcribed to her. In things therefore that fall under our ſenſes, the effects of nature produce always the ſame agreable or diſagreable ſenſations, whether we obſerve or not how the thing happens; whether we trouble ourſelves with tracing theſe effects to their cauſes, or are ſatisfied with enjoying them; whether in fine we reduce to any fixt method the art of managing the natural cauſes purſuant to rules, or follow only our inſtinct in the application of theſe cauſes.

We are ſenſible therefore of the faults our comedians commit, tho' we are unacquainted with the art which ſhews how to avoid them. We ſee even in Cicero, that among thoſe who hiſſed at the actors in his time when they were miſtaken in their meaſure, there was but a very ſmall number

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ber of persons who understood the art, and could tell precisely in what the error consisted. Most of them discovered the mistake only by means of the senses. *How few are there*, says Cicero, *in a multitude of spectators, that are thoroughly versed in the science of music? And yet as soon as an actor is mistaken in his measure, either by lengthning or shortning too much a syllable, he is immediately hissed at by the whole house.*

But (some will say) we have several very knowing comedians in their art, who in composing the declamation of their own part, may by their superior abilities imbellish it with several beauties and graces, which another is not master of. Secondly, (it will be still objected) a composed declamation must strip those actors who submit to it, of their fire and enthusiasm. Their action cannot be natural, but must appear at least languid and heavy. The ancient practice therefore puts an excellent player upon a level with an indifferent one.

I answer to the first objection. True it is, that this practice made the spectators lose some beauties in a part declaimed by an excellent comedian. For example, if the actress who plays the part of Paulina in Polieuctes, were obliged to follow a declamation noted by another person, this subjection would hinder her from throwing some beauties, of which she is mistress, into particular parts

* *Quotusquisque est qui teneat artem numerorum ac modorum? At in hic si paululum modò offensum est, ut aut contractione brevius fieret, aut productione longius, theatra tota reclamant.* Cic. de orat. lib. 3.

of

of her declamation. But this very actress (to make use of the same example) would play equally well the intire part of Paulina, were this part composed and noted. On the other hand, what an advantage would it not be to us, if all the parts of Polieuctes were composed? Let us but recollect how the second characters are declaimed by actors who recite them according to their fancy. In fine, as long as it is allowed that there will be always a greater number of indifferent than excellent actors, it must be allowed likewise, that the loss mentioned in the objection would be compensated in such a manner, as we should not fail of being considerable gainers.

To the second objection my answer is, that it was the same thing with this noted declamation as with the music of our operas. The most exact and most skilful composer of declamation left room for good actors to display their talents, and to shew, not only in their gesture, but likewise in the pronunciation, their superiority over indifferent artists. 'Tis impossible to note all the accents, rests, softenings, inflexions, shakes and breakings of the voice; and in short, if I may thus express myself, the spirit of declamation, whereof the variety of tones is only the body. Even in music itself we cannot write in notes all that is necessary for giving the modulation its true expression, and the strength and imbellishments of which it is susceptible. We cannot note down exactly the swiftness of the movement, tho' this movement is the very soul of music. The

directions

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directions which muſicians, and eſpecially the Italians, write in common letters on one ſide of the compoſition, to ſhew whether the movement is to be quick, or ſlow, ſhew it but very imperfectly. The only method hitherto found, purſuant to what we have already obſerved, of preſerving the true movement of compoſition, is that of tradition; for the inſtrument invented by way of clock-work, to retain the juſt movement which compoſers gave to their airs and ſongs, in order to preſerve it more exactly, have not as yet met with any great ſucceſs.

An indifferent actor therefore does not ſing the part of Atys or Rowland, ſo well as it is ſung by a good actor, tho' they both intone the ſame notes, and follow Lulli's meaſure. The good actor who enters into the ſpirit of what he ſings, accelerates or ſlackens ſeaſonably ſome notes, borrowing from one to lend to the other; he throws out or retains his voice; he dwells upon ſome places; in fine he does ſeveral things which improve the expreſſion and graces of his modulation, that an indifferent actor either omits, or does wrong. Each actor ſupplies out of his fund, and in proportion to his capacity, the want of what could not be written in notes.

Thoſe who have been preſent at the operas of Lulli (which are now become the pleaſure of mankind) when this famous muſician was ſtill living, and inſtructed the actors *viva voce* in thoſe things which could not be committed to notes, affirm they found an expreſſion in them at that time, which

which is hardly any longer perceptible. We find, ſay they, indeed the modulations of Lulli, but we ſeldom meet with that ſpirit which animated theſe modulations. The recitatives ſeem to have no life, and the balet airs leave us quite tranquil. They alledge as a proof of what they advance, that the repreſentation of Lulli's operas laſts longer at preſent, than when they were executed under his direction; tho' they ought not to laſt near ſo long, becauſe 'tis unuſual now to repeat a great many airs, which Lulli generally played twice. The reaſon of this is, as theſe very ſame perſons affirm, (for I warrant nothing myſelf) becauſe Lulli's *rhythmus* is no longer obſerved, but is altered by the actors either thro' ignorance, or preſumption.

'Tis therefore certain that the notes of operas do not teach the intire execution, but leave a great many things unnoted, which the actor performs well or ill, according to his capacity. By a much ſtronger reaſon we may conclude that the compoſers of declamation did not debar good actors from diſplaying their talents.

In fine, the ſubjection of following the noted declamation, did not render the ancient actors languid and conſequently incapable of moving the ſpectator. In the firſt place, as the actors themſelves who recite in operas, are moved during their recitation; and as the conſtraint they are under of conforming to note and meaſure, does not hinder them from being animated, and conſequently from declaiming with an eaſy and natural action; in like manner the conſtraint which the ancients were under of following a noted declamation, did not debar the actors from putting

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themſelves in the place of the perſonage they repreſented. In the ſecond place (and this anſwer alone is ſufficient to refute the objection) we are convinced that the ancient actors were as much moved, tho' under the conſtraint of conforming to a noted declamation, as ours are in declaiming after their own fancy. Quintilian ſays, [a] that he has ſeen players come off the ſtage with tears in their eyes, when they had been acting a very engaging part. They were touched themſelves, and conſequently drew tears from the ſpectators. Beſides, what great difference did not the ancients make between their actors? This objection againſt the cuſtom of compoſing and noting the declamation, might have appeared of ſome weight, before the invention of operas; but the ſucceſs of this ſpectacle, in which the actor, as we have already obſerved, is obliged to follow the note and meaſure, renders the objection frivolous. Experience diſſipates in a moment a great many ſeeming difficulties, which reaſon alone would never perhaps be able to remove. 'Tis even dangerous to attempt to reaſon before a perſon has had ſome experience. We muſt make ſeveral reflections before we can judge properly whether an argumentation that runs upon poſſibilities, be ſolid or not; whereas experience ſets us right in an inſtant. In fine, how comes it that the ancients who underſtood the merit of arbitrary declamation as well as we, determined, notwithſtanding their experience, in favor of the noted declamation?

[a] *Vidi ego ſæpe hiſtriones atque comœdos, cum ex aliquo graviore actu perſonam depoſuiſſent, flentes adhuc, egredi.* QUINT. Inſt. lib. 9. cap. 3.

But

But it will be objected that moſt of the artiſts themſelves condemn the practice of compoſing and noting the declamation, as ſoon as it is explained to them. I ſhall anſwer in the firſt place, that ſeveral perſons worthy of credit have aſſured me, that Moliere, directed by the ſtrength of his genius, and probably without being informed of what has been here explained concerning the ancient muſic, practiſed ſomething very like the cuſtom of the ancients; and that he had contrived notes to mark the tones he was to obſerve in declaiming thoſe parts which he recited always in a uniform manner. I have likewiſe been informed that Beaubourg and ſome of our other actors uſed the ſame method. Secondly, we ought not to be ſurprized at this judgment of the artiſts. The ſpirit of man has a natural averſion to conſtraint; which is the neceſſary conſequence of all thoſe methods that pretend to oblige us to conform to certain rules. *Man will not be conſtrained*, ſays Montagne, *even in the manner of purſuing his pleaſures.* Let us propoſe a military diſcipline to unpractiſed Barbarians; they will anſwer us directly, that theſe laws muſt take away from their courage that impetuoſity which renders it triumphant. And yet we are convinced that the military diſcipline ſupports men's valor by thoſe very laws to which it ſubjects them. Tho' ſome perſons who conſtantly declaim, without being acquainted with any other rules but rote and inſtinct, reject at the firſt thought the cuſtom of the ancients; it does not follow that this cuſtom is therefore to be condemned. It does not even follow that they would continue to diſapprove of it,

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were they to give themſelves a little trouble to reflect on its advantages and inconveniences. Perhaps they would regret there was no ſuch art to be learnt in their youth, the time in which we are taught to execute with eaſe, purſuant to a certain method.

The attention of conforming to ſuch rules as we have learnt from our infancy ceaſes very ſoon to be a conſtraint. The precepts we ſtudied in that ſtage of life, ſeem even to be changed into a portion of our natural light. Quintilian anſwering thoſe who pretended that an orator by following his vivacity and enthuſiaſm in declaiming, muſt be more moving than one that regulated his action and premeditated geſtures, by the precepts of art, ſays, [a] that this way of thinking tends to ſubvert all kind of ſtudy; and that culture improves the brighteſt capacities.

[a] *Sunt tamen qui rudem illam & qualem impetus cujuſque animi tulit actionem, judicent fortiorem, ſed non alii ferè quam qui etiam in dicendo curam ſolent improbare, & quidquid ſtudio paratur. Noſtro labori dent veniam, qui nihil credimus eſſe perfectum, niſi ubi natura cura juvetur.* QUINT. Inſt. lib. 11. cap. 3.

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ERRATA.

VOL. I. page 39, line 24, for *meaſures* read *modes*. p. 46, l. 28, for *none* r. *any*. p. 60, l. 11, for *of* r. *in*. p. 75, l. 29, for *employs*, r. *employs*. p. 87, l. 26, *to* omitted before *ſuch*. p. 121, l. 30, for *affectation* r. *affection*. p. 133, l. 10, for *whilſt* r. *but*. p. 147, l. 24, for *ridenſque* r. *ridentque*. p. 148, l. 5, for *neither* r. *either*; and in the next line for *nor* r. *or*. p. 161, l. 3, dele the ſecond *The*. p. 209, l. 10, for *began firſt* r. *firſt began*. p. 213, l. 15, for *or* r. *nor*. p. 223, l. 16, the comma at *perſonages* ought to be at *ſcene*. p. 258, l. 32, for *are* r. *is*. p. 296, l. 15, for *Janiculcum* r. *Janiculum*. *ibid.* l. 25, for *Villa* r. *the Villa*. p. 342, l. 12, dele *not*. p. 389, laſt line, for *nor* r. *no*. ibid. for *alarm* r. *alarms*.

VOL. II. p. 139, l. 2, dele *ſame*. p. 147, l. 4 & 5, for *does not depend ſo much* r. *depends more*. *ibid.* l. 5, for *as* r. *than*. p. 157, l. 23, for *thoſe* r. *the*. p. 335, firſt line, for *nor* r. *or*.

VOL. III. p. 28, l. 12, for *uſes* r. *uſe*. p. 77, l. 19, for *number*, r. *numbers*. p. 91, l. 11, for *ſinging* r. *modulation*. p. 127, l. 16, the word *all* omitted before *du gros*. p. 142, l. 13, for *are* r. *is*.

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